HOMAGE

Mahatma Gandhi did not set out to evolve a philosophy of life or formulate a system of beliefs or ideals. He had probably neither the inclination nor the time to do so. He had, however, firm faith in truth and *ahimsa,* and the practical application of these to problems which confronted him may be said to constitute his teachings and philosophy.

There was hardly any political, social, religious, agrarian, labour, industrial or other problem which did not come under his purview and with which he did not deal in his own way within the framework of the principles which he held to be basic and fundamental. There was hardly any aspect of life in India which he did not influence and fashion according to his own pattern, beginning with the small details of individual life regarding food, dress, daily occupation, right up to big social problems which had for centuries become a part of life — not only unbreakable but also sacrosanct — like the caste system and untouchability.

His views appeared to be startlingly fresh, unhampered by tradition or prevalent custom. So also, his methods of dealing with problems, big and small, were no less novel and apparently unconvincing, but ultimately successful. Evidently, by his very nature he could never be dogmatic. He could never shut himself out from new light born of experience resulting from new experiments. For the same reason, again, he was no stickler for superficial consistency. In fact, his opponents, and sometimes even his followers, saw apparent contradiction, in some of Gandhiji's actions. He was so open to conviction, and had such an extraordinary amount of moral courage that once he was convinced that any particular action of which he was the author was defective, he never hesitated to correct himself and declare publicly that he was in the wrong. We often find him subjecting his own decisions and actions to an objective and impartial criticism. Little

wonder, therefore, that many of his actions sometimes appeared to mystify his own admirers and to confound his critics.

For a proper appreciation of such a man it is essential to take a comprehensive and collective view of his teachings and the events of his life. Any sketchy or piecemeal study of his life's story might prove misleading, doing as little justice to this great man as to the reader. This is the primary reason why a compilation of Gandhiji's writings on such a vast scale had to be undertaken. This series, which, I am told, will consist of over fifty volumes, has its *raison d'etre* in this very trait of Mahatma Gandhi.

By undertaking to bring out this series, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry of the Government of India has provided the most essential basis for a study of Mahatma Gandhi, his teachings, his beliefs and his philosophy of life. It will be for students and thinkers to do what Mahatma Gandhi never attempted. With all the material thus made available, they will be able to formulate, as it were, in the form of a thesis his philosophy of life, his teachings, his ideas and programmes, and his views on the innumerable problems which arise in life, in a logical and philosophical manner and classified under different heads and categories. In his scheme of things, there was room for matters big and small, for problems of world-wide importance and of limited personal import. Though nearly all his life he had to grapple with large political issues, a very substantial part of his writings relates to social, religious, educational, economic and linguistic problems.

He was a very regular correspondent. There was hardly a letter calling for a considered reply which he did not answer himself. Letters from individuals, dealing with their personal and private problems, constituted a considerable portion of his correspondence and his replies are valuable as guidance to others with similar problems. For a great period of his life, he did not take the assistance of any stenographer or typist, and used to write whatever he required, in his own hand, and even when such assistance became unavoidable, he continued writing a great deal in his own hand. There were occasions

when he became physically unable to write with the fingers of his right hand and, at a late stage in his life, he learnt the art of writing with his left hand. He did the same thing with spinning. Private correspondence, which absorbed much of his writing in this way, constituted an important and significant part of his teachings, as applied to particular problems of the ordinary man in his everyday life.

If ever there was a man who took a total view of life and who devoted himself to the service of mankind, it was certainly Gandhiji. If his pattern of thinking was sustained by faith and the lofty ideals of service, his actions and actual teachings were always influenced by considerations at once moral and eminently practical. Throughout his career as a public leader extending over nearly sixty long years, he never allowed exigencies to shape his views. In other words, he never allowed himself to use wrong means to attain the right ends. His punctiliousness in the choice of means was so great, that even the achievement of the end was subordinated to the nature of the means used, because he believed that the right end could not be achieved by wrong means and what could be achieved by the use of wrong means would be only a distortion of the right end.

The undoubted and abiding worth of this collection of his writings and speeches is apparent. Here are the words of the Master covering some six decades of a superbly human and intensely active public life—words that shaped and nurtured a unique movement and led it to success; words that inspired countless individuals and showed them the light; words that explored and showed a new way of life; words that emphasized cultural values which are spiritual and eternal, transcending time and space and belonging to all humanity and all ages. It is well, therefore, that it is sought to preserve them.

His method constituted a soul-stirring assertion of man's abiding trust in man, of the belief that the sense of morality is inherent in the spiritual equipment of human beings. The freedom of his concept cannot be attained through mere legis-

lation and decrees, nor can it be had through mere scientific and technological advance. A society, to be really free, has to be organized for freedom and that organization has to be started with the individual himself. To the extent that the Indian national life remains inspired by and patterned after his ideas, it will continue to be a source of inspiration. To the extent free India works his ideas and attains progressively higher integration, she will succeed in extending the frontiers of culture and blazing a new trail.

Many of his ideas, however, have yet to be fully imbibed. While it is agreed that the liberating role of any social order must be judged by the degree of actual freedom it allows to its members, there is not adequate appreciation of the fact that a centralized organization, industrial, social or political, implies a corresponding curtailment of freedom of the individual. The golden mean remains to be discovered and adopted. His economics is often confounded with austerity, if not scarcity. His discipline is confused with rigid morality, destitute of colour and beauty. With his few and limited needs, he lived a full and rich life, and in his own living, he demonstrated the truth of his beliefs, which in the background of eroded faith appeared too noble to be true. It is in this light that we have to understand the vows and observances of the inmates of his *ashram*, which used to be repeated morning and evening at prayer time, and comprised non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *Brahmacharya* or chastity, non-possession, bread-labour, control of the palate, fearlessness, tolerance, i.e., equal respect for all religions, removal of untouchability and *swadeshi* in the performance of one's duties.

Let me close this with the assurance that no one, who takes a dip into Gandhiji's stream of life as represented in this series, will emerge disappointed, for there lies in it buried a hidden treasure out of which everyone can carry as much as he likes, according to his own capacity and faith.

RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN
NEW DELHI
January 16, 1958

Rajendra Prasad

FOREWORD

In another month's time ten years will have passed since Gandhiji's life came to an end. He was of a ripe age, but he was still full of vitality and his capacity for work was prodigious. The end came suddenly by the hand of an assassin. India was shocked and the world grieved, and to those of us who were more intimately connected with him the shock and sorrow were hard to bear. And yet, perhaps, it was a fitting close to a magnificent career and in his death, as in his life, he served the cause to which he had devoted himself. None of us would have liked to see him gradually fade in body and mind with increasing years. And so he died, as he had lived, a bright star of hope and achievement, the Father of the Nation which had been shaped and trained by him for half a century.

To those who had the high privilege of being associated with him in some of his innumerable activities, he will ever remain the embodiment of youthful energy. We shall not think of him as an old man, but rather as one who represented with the vitality of Spring the birth of a new India. To a younger generation who did not come in personal contact with him, he is a tradition, and numerous stories are woven round his name and activities. He was great in his life, he is greater since he passed away.

I am glad that the Government of India are bringing out a complete edition of his writings and speeches. It is most necessary that a full and authentic record of what he has written and said should be prepared. Because of his innumerable activities and voluminous writings, the preparation of this record is itself a colossal undertaking and may take many years to complete. But this is a duty that we owe to ourselves and to future generations.

In a collection like this there is bound to be a mixture of what might be called the important and the unimportant or the casual. Yet, sometimes it is the casual word that throws more light on a person's thinking than a more studied writing or utterance. In any event, who are we to pick and choose? Let him speak for himself. To him life was an integrated whole, a closely woven garment of many colours. A word to a child, a touch of healing to a sufferer, was as important as a resolution of challenge to the British Empire.

In all reverence of spirit, let us undertake this task, so that succeeding generations may have some glimpses of this beloved leader of ours who illumined our generation with his light and not only brought national freedom to us but also gave us an insight into the deeper qualities which have ennobled man. In ages to come, people will wonder that such a man once trod on our Indian soil and poured out his love and service to our people, and indeed to humanity.

I write this in Darjeeling with the mighty Kinchinjunga looking down upon us. This morning I had a glimpse of Everest. It seemed to me that there was about Gandhiji something of the calm strength and the timelessness of Everest and Kinchinjunga.

DARJEELING,
December 27, 1957

Jawaharlal Nehru

GENERAL PREFACE

The Government of India have undertaken this project of publishing the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi not merely from a sense of requiting a nation's debt to the architect of its freedom, but from the conviction that all the writings, speeches and letters of the Mahatma need to be collected and recorded in one place for the benefit of posterity.

This series proposes to bring together all that Gandhiji said and wrote, day after day, year after year. His mission extended over half a century and influenced many other countries besides our own. Few great men have given their attention to a greater variety of life's problems. Those who knew him in the body as he trod this earth, striving every moment to practise what he believed, owe it to those who cannot have the privilege of learning by his presence and example, that they should hand over to the coming generations the rich heritage of his teachings in its purity and, as far as possible, in its entirety.

Gandhiji's writings, speeches and letters cover the period 1884-1948, and almost sixty years of very active public life. They are to be found scattered in various parts of the world, more especially in the three countries, India, England and South Africa.

The writings and speeches lie not only in the few books he wrote or were published during his life-time, but also in dusty files, Government records and Blue books, and in stacks of old newspapers and journals in English, Gujarati and Hindi. His letters are with innumerable individuals, high and low, rich and poor, of every race and creed, all over the world. It is necessary to collect all such material before it perishes or is lost.

Several collections or, more correctly, compilations of his writings and speeches no doubt already exist. They have been published, notably by the Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, under a Trust established by Gandhiji himself. Valuable as these publications are, most of them are limited to the Indian period of Gandhiji's work, and primarily to what was published in his own journals like *Navajivan*, *Young India* and the *Harijan* group of weeklies. Besides, they are arranged for the most part topic-wise, so that, sometimes, only extracts from a writing or speech relevant to a particular topic are given and other portions omitted.

So far as letters are concerned, the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi has done a great service by collecting and photostating as many of them as it could secure, but they have not yet been published. The letters collected by the Nidhi run by now into thousands. But many more letters still remain to be obtained and published.

Thus, no attempt has so far been made to collect all Gandhiji's writings, speeches and letters, to whichever period of his life they belonged and from wherever they were found, and to publish them whole and entire in chronological order. The task was beyond the resources of private individuals or institutions. Consequently, the Government of India have undertaken it.

Gandhiji's output in the way of writings, speeches and letters, even in the early South African years, was phenomenally large. The material pertaining to this period may cover about a dozen Volumes. The entire series, at a fair estimate, may run into as many Volumes of 400 pages each as the years of his public life.

Besides, his utterances were not confined to one language. He wrote and spoke in three languages: Gujarati, Hindi and English. The Editors' task, therefore, is not only one of collection, but also of accurate translation from Gujarati and Hindi into English, and from Gujarati

and English into Hindi, the two languages in which the series will be published. Further, the work is complicated by the fact that the material for the early period of his life, spent in South Africa, lies outside India, in the Colonial Office Records in London and in South Africa itself. Access to sources in South Africa is comparatively difficult. In addition to the communications he addressed to officials, Gandhiji wrote copiously in *Indian Opinion*. Unlike his later articles in *Young India*, *Navajivan* and *Harijan*, *Indian Opinion* articles were unsigned. In the task of identifying and authenticating the writings of Gandhiji, the Editors have received valuable help from Shri H. S. L. Polak and Shri Chhaganlal Gandhi, both of whom had been closely associated not only with *Indian Opinion* but also with Gandhiji's other activities in South Africa.

In the nature of the work itself no claim of completeness or finality can be made for this collection. Later research may lead to the discovery of documents not now obtainable. It would have been inadvisable to wait indefinitely to achieve perfection. The task of improving on this work must be left to the future. For the present, however, every effort is being made to collect and verify all material that can be had, and to publish it with brief notes to aid the reader in understanding the text. If material is secured too late to go into a Volume, it is proposed to publish it separately.

The arrangement of the material, as already observed, will be chronological, all items of a particular date, whether article, speech or letter, being placed together. The main reason for preferring this arrangement to publishing the different categories of material in separate series is that such separation would be artificial. Gandhiji often dealt with the same subject, now in a writing, now in a speech and now in a letter—all in the course of a few days. He saw life as a whole and not in compartments. His views suffered little change because of the form he chose

for expression—writing, speech or letter. If all these are in the same Volume side by side, strictly in chronological order, the reader would get a fuller picture of how Gandhiji functioned and how he dealt with issues as they came up. The Volumes would then reveal the richness of Gandhiji's mind which, while dealing with matters of great public importance, concerned itself no less with intimate personal problems of individuals. The placing of personal letters amidst material dealing with public issues would mirror his personality much more faithfully and completely than if the letters were published in a series by themselves.

The aim of the series being to reproduce Gandhiji's actual words, as far as possible, reports of his speeches, interviews and conversations which did not seem to be authentic have been omitted, as also reports in indirect form of his statements. In the case of speeches, however, reports in indirect narration are included when their authenticity is beyond doubt, or when they are not covered by a report in direct narration, or when they give additional information not otherwise available. Documents or letters written by Gandhiji as a lawyer, purely in the course of his profession, and documents which are of a totally routine nature and of no biographical relevance have likewise been omitted. Letters of a confidential nature, or letters which might cause embarrassment to any persons living, if made public, have also not been included.

The translation into English from Hindi and Gujarati, and into Hindi from English and Gujarati is being done by carefully chosen panels of experienced translators. For purposes of maintaining uniformity of style, the translation of material which forms part of one Volume is, as far as possible, being done by one translator.

In reproducing material, effort has been made to keep strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected, and words abbreviated in the text have generally been spelt out in full.

The date of a piece of writing, other than a newspaper or periodical article, or of a speech, is given uniformly at the beginning on the right-hand top corner in the position customary for dating letters, even if, in a few cases in the original, it was given at the end. Where no date was given in the original, an approximate one is given in square brackets, and wherever necessary, reasons are stated for the ascribed date. The date given at the end is that of publication. In the case of personal letters, the name of the person to whom the letter is addressed is given uniformly at the top. The source from where an item has been obtained is given at the end of it. Variant spellings of a name have been reproduced as in the original.

All matter in italics introducing the text and in footnotes, as also matter within square brackets in the text, is by the Editors. Round brackets in the text are as in the original. Where in the original passages have been quoted by Gandhiji from other sources or, sometimes, his own writings, statements or reports, these have been given in small type in indented paragraphs.

In order to minimize footnotes, Notes on places, persons, laws and the longer references and a Glossary of non-English terms have been given at the end. Each Volume carries a Chronology relating to the period covered. A note on sources is also included.

This project was started in February 1956. It owes its origin to Shri P. M. Lad, then Secretary to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, who helped to lay the basis of the work before his untimely death in March 1957.

The control and direction of the series is vested in an Advisory Board, the original members of which were: Shri Morarji R. Desai (Chairman), Shri Kaka Kalelkar, Shri Devadas Gandhi, Shri Pyarelal Nayyar, Shri Maganbhai P. Desai, Shri G. Ramachandran, Shri Shriman Narain, Shri Jivanji D. Desai, and Shri P. M. Lad. The

purpose of constituting the Board was that the project should have the benefit of the advice and experience of people intimately associated with the life and work of Gandhiji.

The work of organizing the collection of material and the editing of the volumes has been entrusted to a Chief Editor. Shri Bharatan Kumarappa was appointed Chief Editor and, later, a member of the Advisory Board. He had worked with unsparing devotion till his death in June 1957. On his demise, just as the first Volume was to go to the press, the Advisory Board invited Shri Jairamdas Doulatram to be Chief Editor and he was appointed also a member of the Board.

The Chief Editor is assisted by a team of Editors—Shri U. R. Rao for Writings, Shri R. K. Prabhu for Speeches, Shri P. G. Deshpande for Letters, Shri S. C. Dixit for Hindi, and Shri M. K. Desai and Shri Ratilal Mehta for Gujarati.

PREFACE TO THIS VOLUME

The earliest period of Gandhiji's life which this Volume covers was for the Editors the most difficult. Gandhiji was abroad for the later and more active part of it, and the material, in the original, was to be found chiefly in England, where he was a student, and in South Africa, where he went initially as a lawyer.

Fortunately for us, Gandhiji had preserved and brought back to India some of the material relating to this period. This consists of stray carbon copies of his correspondence, handwritten drafts of letters and memorials, typewritten or printed copies of petitions and pamphlets issued by him, newspaper clippings from South African papers and a few South African Blue books in which were published some of his letters, petitions and statements.

Gandhiji did not, however, preserve all his writings. Referring to a document which he prepared on the fundamental doctrines of Hinduism, he remarks in his *Satyagraha in South Africa* (1950, p. 242): "I have thrown away or burnt many such things in my life. I destroyed such papers as I felt it was not necessary to preserve or as the scope of my activities was extended. I am not sorry for this, as to have preserved all of them would have been burdensome and expensive. I should have been compelled to keep cabinets and boxes, which would have been an eyesore to one who has taken the vow of poverty."

Research Assistants have been collecting for us material from the official and other records available in London and in South Africa. This has supplemented the material Gandhiji had brought with him from South Africa.

In the South African material are several petitions and memorials submitted by Gandhiji on behalf of the Indian

community. They are signed not by him but by representative leaders of the community or by office-bearers of, say, the Natal Indian Congress or the Transvaal British Indian Association. That he drafted them seems clear from his own statement in his letter dated September 25, 1895, (published in this Volume, p. 247) where he says, "The responsibility for drafting . . . the several memorials rests entirely on my shoulders." There is proof of this in regard to the petition to Lord Ripon in July 1894 which is signed by others and not by him, but about which he writes in *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (1956, p. 142): "I took considerable pains over drawing up this petition. I read all the literature available on the subject."

Although Gandhiji lived in Natal for a few years from 1894, some petitions from the South African Republic or the Transvaal, as it came to be called later, have also been included in this Volume. The reason for ascribing these petitions to Gandhiji is that he spent his first year in South Africa, i.e., a part of 1893 and of 1894, in Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal, and came in close touch with the Indians there and their problems. He writes in his autobiography (p.127): ". . . there was now in Pretoria no Indian I did not know, or whose condition I was not acquainted with." He also says (p.126) that he formed an association there, "to make representations to the authorities concerned in respect of the hardships of the Indian settlers, and offered to place at its disposal as much of my time and service as was possible." Though he worked in Natal thereafter, it is quite likely that the Transvaal Indians approached him to draft their petitions for them. Wherever he was, whether in Natal or the Transvaal, he was intensely interested in the Indian question in all South Africa, and he wrote constantly on the problems of Indians also in other parts of South Africa, like the Orange Free State and the Cape Colony, and even of Indians in Rhodesia, though he did not live in these places.

It must, however, be stated that not all petitions submitted by Indians were drafted by Gandhiji; some had been submitted even prior to Gandhiji's arrival in South Africa. These petitions were evidently drafted for them professionally by European lawyers. All the same, it is quite possible that once Gandhiji appeared on the scene and started taking deep interest in their problems, Indians, as a rule, got their petitions drafted by him. This is also the view of Shri Chhaganlal Gandhi and of Shri Polak, both of whom worked with Gandhiji from about 1904 and remained with him for the rest of his stay in South Africa.

Two other documents also have been included here, though they do not bear his signature. These are the Constitution and the First Report of the Natal Indian Congress. Gandhiji founded the Natal Indian Congress and was its first Secretary. A draft of the Constitution in Gandhiji's own hand has been found.

From available evidence, the first petition which Gandhiji drafted was in June 1894. Thereafter, he seems tirelessly to have framed petitions one after another in rapid succession. At this stage in his public work, he employed, for righting wrongs, the method of publishing facts and appealing to reason and conscience through argument. It was after trying this method for over 12 years in South Africa that he came to the conclusion that, when vested interests refused to yield to argument, *satyagraha* or direct action of some kind was necessary.

Readers should remember that during the period covered by this Volume, Gandhiji was only in his twenties. The writings and speeches show remarkable self-restraint and moderation, strict conformity to truth and a desire to do full justice to the view-point of the opponent—characteristics which remained with him through life.

A note on the Constitutional set-up in South Africa, a Chronicle of South Africa, a Historical Background and two maps, one of Natal and the other of South Africa,

have been given for general reference in connection with Gandhiji's work in South Africa from 1893 to 1914.

As it is beyond the scope of this series to give a brief biography of Gandhiji, an attempt has been made in the Chronology to give the reader an outline of Gandhiji's life and work from his birth up to the last date covered by this Volume.

For material in this Volume we are thankful to the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, New Delhi, which has allowed us freely to use its library and museum, with its useful stock of books, and photostats of Gandhiji's letters and other unpublished documents. We are indebted also to the Sabarmati Ashram Preservation and Memorial Trust, Ahmedabad, which permitted us to use valuable material such as South African press cuttings and Blue books, as also Gandhiji's letters and material issued by him from time to time in South Africa.

We are also thankful to the Colonial Office in London, the British Museum and the office of the London Vegetarian Society for affording facilities to our London Assistant for carrying on research in their libraries and record rooms, for needed material.

We are obliged to the National Library, Calcutta, and to newspaper offices in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras for the facilities they gave us to collect material.

The Gujarat Vidyapith Granthalaya, Ahmedabad, the A.I.C.C. Library and the Indian Council of World Affairs Library, New Delhi, the Delhi University Library (Department of African Studies), the U.S.I.S. Libraries in Delhi and Bombay, the University Library and the Asiatic Society Library, Bombay, provided us facilities for reference. We are grateful to them.

For one of the photographs here reproduced, we are indebted to the publishers of *Mahatma*, and for the photostats, to the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN PROBLEM

When Gandhiji came to South Africa in 1893, the country consisted of four Colonies—Natal, the Cape, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. These Colonies were ruled by the descendants of Europeans who had discovered South Africa by sheer accident on their way to fabled India. They settled in it and developed it first as a convenient half-way house to the East, and later as their home.

The White people who were dominant in the country in 1893 were the Dutch or Boers and the British—the Dutch in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, and the British in Natal and the Cape. The Dutch had enjoyed almost undisputed rule in the country for about 200 years before the British arrived on the scene and captured the Cape from them in 1806 and Natal in 1843. Most of the Dutch thereupon moved inland and took possession of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. The British, however, were settled also in Dutch territories and the Dutch in British territories.

There was constant friction between these two peoples, both seeking ascendancy in the country till, finally, it came to a head in the Boer War (1899-1902), as a result of which the whole of South Africa became a part of the British Empire. The British professed that they fought the War primarily to secure for British and Indian settlers in Dutch territories their legitimate rights.

At the time of Gandhiji's arrival in South Africa, the four Colonies were independent of one another and followed policies of their own. The British Government in London, at this time, maintained its agents in these Colonies to pro-

tect the interests of its subjects, and controlled the policies of their Governments to some extent. But later, when, in 1910, these Colonies came together to form the Union Government of South Africa under the British flag and had acquired full self-government, the Imperial Government followed a policy of non-interference in regard to them as well as to the Government of South Africa as a whole, on the ground that South Africa was now a Dominion, and, therefore, a self-governing member of the British Commonwealth, free to order its affairs according to its own wishes. The grievances of its Asiatic subjects became then a matter for the Governor-General-in-Council of the Union of South Africa, and the capacity of the British Government to influence South African policies in this regard became nil. But this was not so during most of the time that Gandhiji was in South Africa.

In developing agriculture and exploiting the mineral resources of the country, the Whites of these Colonies needed labour. They did not find the Africans steady and dependable as labourers, for they were content to live on what they obtained from their land, and most of them were not eager to work for wages. The British Colonies, therefore, arranged with the British rulers of India to have Indian labour exported to South Africa under an indenture or contract. The first batch of such labourers came into South Africa in 1860. When the period of contract was over, these labourers could return to India, or remain in South Africa and renew their contract for a further period of five years, or settle as free citizens on land allotted to them by the Government equivalent in value to the cost of their return passage.

These labourers were generally from among the poorest in Inda, untrained in hygienic habits and backward in several respects. Very soon in their wake came Indian traders to cater to their needs. This was the origin of the Indian population in South Africa.

It was expressly laid down by the Government of India, in 1869, before renewal of contract for further emigration of such labour, that the labourers should enjoy equality of status after the period of indenture, and that they should live under the ordinary law of the land and not be subject to legislative or administrative discrimination. This was agreed to by the Natal Government which had asked for such labourers, and further confirmed in 1875 by the British Government in London. Besides, the British Queen had, in her Proclamation of 1858, guaranteed the same rights to "the natives of our Indian territories" as "to all our other subjects".

The Dutch, however, were all along averse to Indians remaining in South Africa. They desired Asiatic labour (including Chinese) to be brought in for a stipulated period and repatriated immediately thereafter. They wanted their Colonies to be exclusively White, with the Africans confined to areas allotted to them.

This was also the desire of the local British, who, like other European businessmen in South Africa, found Indians formidable rivals both in agriculture and in trade. The Indian cultivator introduced new fruits and vegetables and produced them cheaply and in abundance, thus bringing down the prices of the White farmer. The Indian trader lived cheaply, spent little on equipment or staff, and, could easily undersell the British and the Dutch. The Whites, therefore, feared that they would be swamped by the Indians, if the Indians were allowed to enter the country freely and establish themselves on land, or trade as they pleased.

Accordingly, numerous restrictions came to be placed on Indians. The earliest of these was Law 3 of 1885 in the Transvaal, a Dutch Republic. It declared that Asiatics could not obtain the rights of Dutch citizenship. It required that, "for sanitary purposes", Indians should reside in locations specially set apart for them, that they should not own

fixed property except in such locations and that such of them as entered for purposes of trade should be registered for a fee, and should obtain a licence.

This, however, was a flagrant contradiction of Article 14 of the London Convention of 1884, between Her Majesty and the Transvaal Dutch Republic, which declared that all persons "other than natives" would have full liberty to enter, travel, reside, hold property, and carry on business in any part of the Republic of the Transvaal, and that they would not be subject to any taxes other than those imposed on Dutch citizens. The British High Commissioner in the Transvaal was there to look after the interests of British subjects resident in the Colony. But owing to pressure of agitation on the part of the Whites of the Transvaal, whether Dutch or British, who spoke of "the threatened invasion of Asiatics" into the Colony, he advised the Home Government not to oppose the law, and the British Government in London thereupon announced its decision not to raise any objections to this anti-Indian legislation.

This reversal of policy towards the Indians in South Africa by the Imperial Government, in spite of its earlier pronouncements that Indians would have equal rights with other British subjects, opened the flood-gates to discriminatory enactments against Indians not only in the Dutch Transvaal but even in British Natal, and this at a time when the Imperial Government had full authority to protect its subjects in both Dutch and British territory.

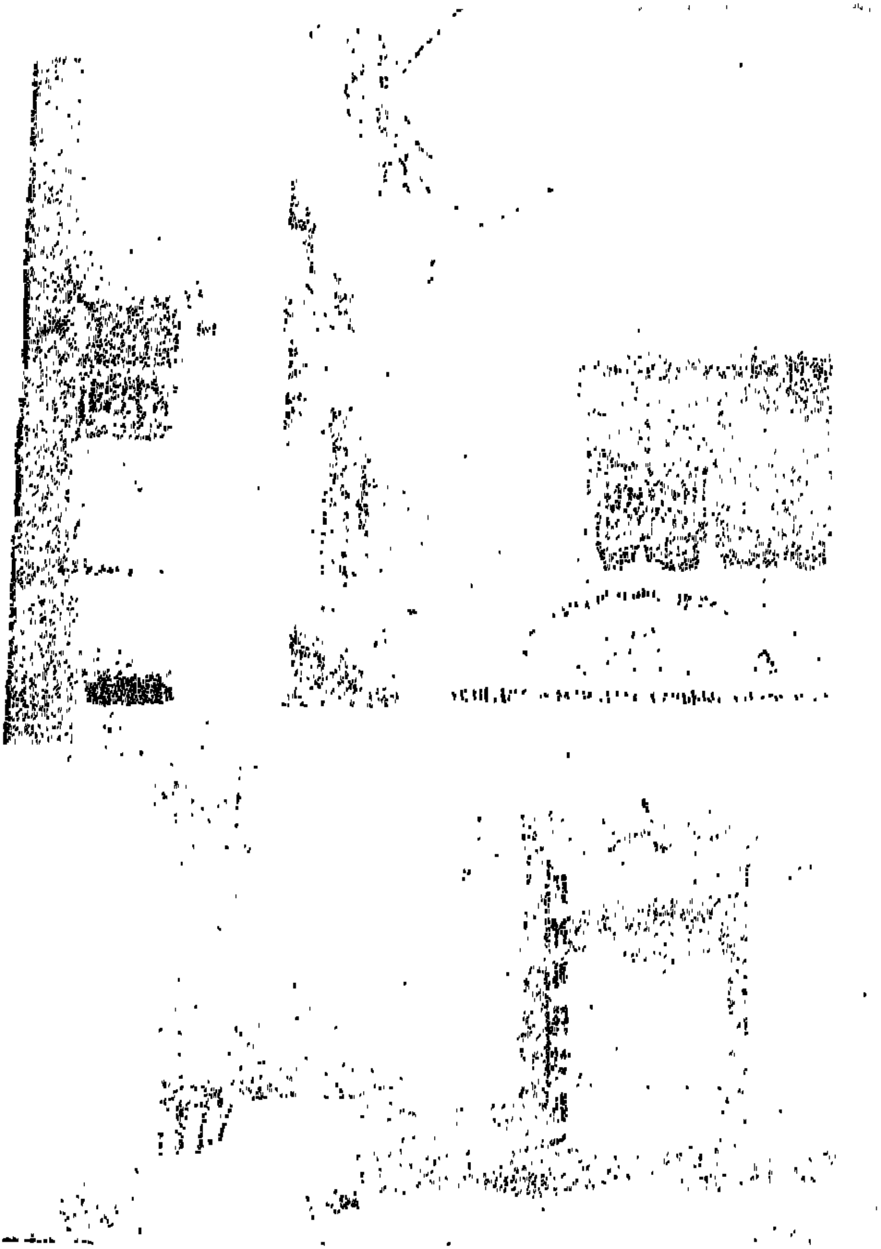
All over South Africa there was racial discrimination practised against Indians—in trains, buses, schools and hotels, and they were not allowed to move from one Colony to another without a permit. In Natal, a British Colony, where Indians were in the largest number, a Bill was about to be passed in 1894 to disenfranchise Indians, thus lowering their status and preventing them from exercising political rights.

Gandhiji had come to South Africa in May 1893 on a professional visit as a lawyer. As he was about to leave South Africa in 1894, after the completion of his legal work, he noticed in the papers a reference to this Bill. On his pointing out to his compatriots, most of whom were uneducated, the implications of this Bill for them, they induced him to stay and help them. The work of seeking redress from this and other grievances of the Indians in South Africa kept him in that country for over 21 years, i.e., till 1914.

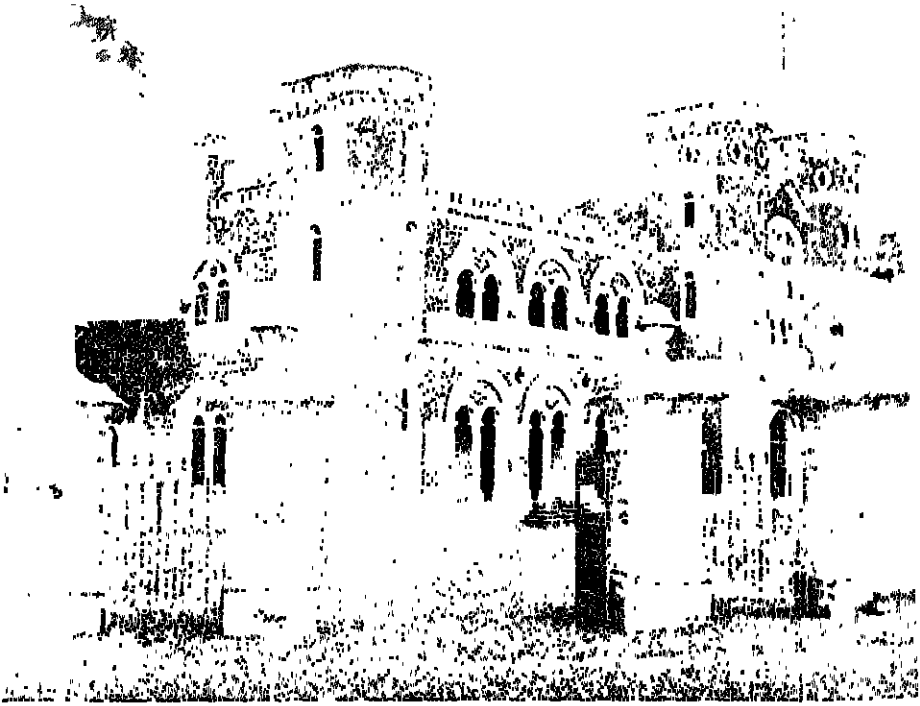
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THE HOUSE AT PORBANDAR WHERE GANDHIJI WAS BO



ALFRED HIGH SCHOOL, RAJKOT, WHICH GANDHIJI ATTENDED

1. *LETTER TO HIS FATHER*

This is a reference to one of Gandhiji's earliest letters. The original not being available, his own report of it as found in his autobiography, is reproduced. When he was 15 years of age he had removed a bit of gold from his brother's armlet to clear a small debt of the latter. He felt so mortified about his act that he decided to make a confession to his father. Parental forgiveness was granted him in the form of silent tears. The incident left a lasting mark on his mind. In Gandhiji's own words, it was an object-lesson to him in the power of ahimsa.

[*1884*]

I wrote it on a slip of paper and handed it to him myself. In this note not only did I confess my guilt, but I asked adequate punishment for it, and closed with a request to him not to punish himself for my offence. I also pledged myself never to steal in future.

The Story of My Experiments with Truth, 1956, p. 27

2. *AT ALFRED HIGH SCHOOL, RAJKOT*

What probably was Gandhiji's first speech was made at a send-off given to him by his fellow-students of the Alfred High School, Rajkot, on July 4, 1888, when he was leaving for England to study for the Bar. In the Autobiography *he says: "I had written out a few words of thanks. But I could scarcely stammer them out. I remember how my head reeled and how my whole frame shook as I stood up to read them." (p. 39) He was then 18*

years of age. A newspaper report of what he said is given below.

July 4, 1888

I hope that some of you will follow in my footsteps and after you return from England you will work whole-heartedly for big reforms in India.

[From Gujarati]
Kathiawar Times, 12-7-1888

3. *LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS GANDHI*

LONDON,
November 9, 1888, Friday

RESPECTED BROTHER,

I am sorry that there has been no letter from you for the last two or three weeks. Your silence is due perhaps to your not having heard from me. But it was impossible for me to post any letters before I reached London. That you should not have written to me on that account is indeed surprising. As I am far from home we can meet only through letters. And if I do not get letters I am very much worried. Therefore please drop a post card every week without fail. I would not have been anxious if you did not have my address. But I am sorry that you have stopped writing after you have written to me twice. I joined the Inner Temple on Tuesday last. I will write in detail after I hear from you next week. The cold here is now bitter but such bad weather generally does not last long. In spite of the cold I have no need of meat or liquor, which fills my heart with joy and thankfulness. I am now keeping very good health. Please give my respects to Mother and Sister-in-law.

D. G. Tendulkar: *Mahatma*, Vol. I; from a photostat of the original in Gujarati.

4. FROM THE LONDON DIARY

When his co-worker and relative, Shri Chhaganlal Gandhi, was proceeding for the first time to London in 1909, Gandhiji gave him his London Diary thinking that it might be of interest and practical use.

The diary filled about 120 pages. Shri Chhaganlal gave it to Mahadev Desai in 1920. But before doing so he faithfully copied out in a notebook the following matter which covered about 20 pages of the original. The remaining 100 pages were not continuous writing but merely a chronicle of incidents during his stay in London from 1888 to 1891.

The original is untraceable. In reproducing Shri Chhaganlal's copy, the Editors have corrected only obvious spelling mistakes, adding punctuation marks, supplying a word here and there and occasionally splitting up the running matter into paragraphs to make it easy to read.

Gandhiji wrote the diary in English when he was 19 years old and his English still in the process of development.

LONDON,
November 12, 1888

What led to the intention of proceeding to London? The scene opens about the end of April. Before the intention of coming to London for the sake of study was actually formed, I had a secret design in my mind of coming here to satisfy my curiosity of knowing what London was. While I was prosecuting my college studies in Bhavnagar, I had a chat with Jayshankar Buch. During the chat he advised me to apply to the Junagadh State to give me a scholarship to proceed to London, I being an inhabitant of Sorath. I do not perfectly remember the answer I made to him that day. I suppose I felt the impossibility of getting the scholarship. From that

[time] I had in my mind the intention of visiting th land. I was finding the means to reach that end.

On 13th April, 1888, I left Bhavnagar to enjoy the vaca tion in Rajkot. After 15 days of vacation, my elder bro ther and I went to see Patwari. On our return my bro ther said : "We would go to see Mavji Joshi,[1]" and sc we went. Mavji Joshi asked me as usual how I did. Then put some questions about my study in Bhavnagar. I plainly told him that I had hardly any chance of passing my examination first year. I also added that I found the course very difficult. Hearing this he advised my brother to send me as soon as possible to London for being called to the Bar. He said the expense will be only Rs. 5,000/-. "Let him take some *udad dal.* There he will cook some food for himself and thereby there will be no objection about religion. Don't reveal the matter to anybody. Try to get some scholarship. Apply to Junagadh and Porbandar States. See my son Kewalram,[2] and if you fail in getting the pecuniary help and if you have no money, sell your furniture. But anyhow send Mohandas to London. I think that is the only means to keep reputation of your deceased father." All of our family members have great faith in what Mavji Joshi says. And my brother who is naturally very credulous made a promise to Mavji Joshi to send me to London. Now was the time for my exertions.

On that very day my brother, notwithstanding his promise to keep the matter secret, told the thing to Khushalbhai.[3] He, of course, approved of it in case I could observe my religion. The very day it was told to Meghjibhai.[4] He quite agreed with the proposal and offered to

[1] Priest, family friend and adviser of the Gandhis.

[2] Leading lawyer of Kathiawar.

[3] Gandhiji's cousin and father of Chhaganlal and Maganlal who both worked with him in South Africa.

[4] Gandhiji's cousin.

give me Rs. 5,000/-. I had some faith in what he said. And when the matter was disclosed to my dear mother, she reproached me for being so credulous, and she said I would never get any money from him when the time comes, which she thought never will come.

On that day I was to [go to] Kevalrambhai. I saw him accordingly. There I had not a satisfactory chat. He no doubt approved of my object but said "You will have to spend there at least Rs. 10,000." This was a great blow to me, and again he said: "You will have to set aside all your religious prejudices, if any. You will have to eat meat, you must drink. You cannot live without that. The more you spend the cleverer you will be. It is a very important thing. I speak to you frankly. Don't be offended; but, look here, you are still very young. There are many temptations in London. You are apt to be entrapped by them." I was partially dejected by this talk. But I am not a man who would, after having formed any intention, leave it easily. He illustrated his statement by giving example of Mr. Gulam Mahomed Munshi. I asked him whether he could help me in any way in getting the scholarship. He answered in the negative. He said he would very gladly do anything except that. I told everything to my brother.

Then I was entrusted with the business of receiving the consent of my dear mother, which I thought was not an arduous task for me. After a day or two, my brother and I went to see Mr. Kevalram; there he saw us though he was very busy at that time. We had a talk of the similar kind that I had with him a day or two earlier. He advised my brother to send me to Porbandar. The proposal was agreed to. Then we returned. I began to introduce the subject to my mother in joke. The joke was turned to reality in no time. Then a day was fixed for my going to Porbandar.

Twice or thrice I prepared to go, but some difficulty

came in my way. Once I was to go with Zaverchand, but an hour before the time of my departure a serious accident took place. I was always quarrelling with my friend Sheikh Mehtab.[1] On the day of departure I was quite engrossed in thinking about the quarrel. We had a musical party at night. I did not enjoy it very well. At about 10.30 p.m. the party ended and we all went to see Meghjibhai and Rami. On our way I was buried in the madcap thoughts of London on one side and the thoughts of Sheikh Mehtab on the other. Amidst thoughts, I came unconsciously in contact with a carriage. I received some injury. Yet I did not take the help of anybody in walking. I think I was quite dizzy. Then we entered the house of Meghjibhai. There I again came in contact with a stone unknowingly and received injury. I was quite senseless. From that [time] I did not know what took place, and after that I am told by them I fell flat on the ground after some steps. I was not myself for 5 minutes. They considered I was dead. But fortunately for myself the ground on which I fell was quite smooth. I came to my senses at last and all of them were quite joyful. The mother was sent for. She was very sorry for me, and this caused my delay though I told them that I was quite well. But none would allow me to go, though I afterwards came to know that my bold and dearest mother would have allowed me to go. But she feared the calumny of other people. At last with great difficulty I was allowed to leave Rajkot for Porbandar after some days. On my way too I had to encounter some difficulties.

At length I reached Porbandar to the joy of all. Lalbhai[2] and Karsondas[3] had come to the Khadi bridge to fetch me home. Now what had I to do in Porbandar

[1] Boyhood friend of Gandhiji whom he tried for several years to reform but without success.

[2] Gandhiji's cousin.

[3] Gandhiji's elder brother.

[was to] exact consent from my uncle, and, secondly, apply to Mr. Lely[1] to render me some pecuniary help, and last, in case of failure to get the State scholarship, to ask Parmanandbhai[2] to give me some money. The first thing I did was that I saw uncle and asked him whether he liked my going to London or not. Then, naturally, as I had expected, he asked me to enumerate the advantages of going to London. This I did according to my power. Then he said: "Of course, the people of this generation would like it very much, but, as for myself, I do not like it. Nevertheless we shall consider afterwards." I was not disappointed by such an answer. At least I had the satisfaction to know that at all events he liked it inwardly and his deeds proved what I thought right.

Unfortunately for me, Mr. Lely was not in Porbandar. It is quite true that misfortunes never come single. After his return from the district where he had gone, he was to go at once on leave. My uncle advised me to wait for him till the next Sunday. And if he did not come up during that time, he said, he would send me where he should be. But it gives me much pleasure to write here that he returned from the district on Sunday. Then it was settled that I should see him on Monday. It was done accordingly. For the first time in my life I had an interview with an English gentleman. Formerly I never dared to front them. But thoughts of London made me bold. I had small talk with him in Gujarati. He was quite in a hurry. He saw me when he was ascending the ladder of the upper story of his bungalow. He said the Porbandar State was very poor and could not give me any pecuniary help. However, he said, I should first graduate in India and then he would see if he could render me any help. Indeed such an answer from him quite

[1] British Agent who was managing the Porbandar State during the minority of the Prince.

[2] Gandhiji's cousin.

disappointed me. I did not expect such a reply from him.

Now what I had to do was to ask Parmanandbhai to give me Rs. 5,000/-. He said he would very gladly give them if my uncle approved of my going to London. I thought this to be rather a difficult task, yet I was determined upon exacting his consent. I saw him when he was busy doing something, and addressed him thus: "Uncle, now tell me what you really think of my going. My chief aim in coming here is to exact your consent." Then he replied: "I cannot approve of it. Don't you know that I am going on a pilgrimage, and is it not disgraceful on my part to say that I like that people should go to London? However, if your mother and brother like it, I do not at all object to it." "But then", I said, "you don't know that you prevent Parmanandbhai from rendering me pecuniary help by refusing to allow my going to London." Just as I uttered these words, he said in an angry tone: "Is it so? My dear chap, you don't know why he says so. He knows that I will never approve of your going and so he brings forth this excuse. But the real thing is that he is never to render you any help of the kind. I do not prevent him from doing so." Thus ended our talk. Then I gaily ran off and saw Parmanandbhai and word by word related what took place between my uncle and myself. He too was quite angry when he heard this and at the same time made a promise to give me Rs. 5,000/-. I was quite overjoyed when he made a promise, and what pleased me more was that he swore by his son. Now from that day I began to think that I would surely go to London. Then I stayed some days in Porbandar and the more I stayed there the more I was assured of the promise.

Now here is what took place at Rajkot during my absence. My friend Sheikh Mehtab who, I should say, is very full of tricks, reminded Meghjibhai of his promise and forged a letter with my signature in which he wrote

that I stood in need of Rs. 5,000/- and so on. The letter was shown to him and it actually passed for a letter written by me. Then, of course, he was quite puffed up and made a solemn promise of giving me Rs. 5,000. I was not informed of this until I reached Rajkot.

Now to return again to Porbandar. At length a day was fixed for my departure and I bade farewell to my family members and was set off for Rajkot, with my brother Karsondas and Meghji's father, really an incarnation of miserliness. Before going to Rajkot, I went to Bhavnagar to sell off my furniture, and discontinue the rent of the house. I did it only in one day and was separated from the friends in the neighbourhood, not without tears from them and my kind landlady. I should never forget their kindness and that of Anopram and others. Having done this, I reached Rajkot.

But I was to see Colonel Watson[1] before my departure for three years. He was to come to Rajkot on the 19th June, 1888. Indeed it was a long time for me because I reached Rajkot in the beginning of May. But I could not help. My brother entertained very high hopes of Colonel Watson. These days were indeed hard days. I could not sleep well at night, was always attacked by dreams. Some persons dissuaded me from going to London and some advised me to do so. Sometimes my mother too asked me not to go, and what was very strange that not unfrequently my brother also changed his mind. So I was held in suspense. But, as all of them knew that I should not leave off anything having first begun it, they were silent. During the time, I was asked by my brother to sound the mind of Meghjibhai about his promise. The result was quite disappointing, of course, and from that time he always acted the part of an enemy. He spoke ill of me before anybody and everybody. But I was quite

[1] Political Agent of Kathiawar, stationed at Rajkot.

able to disregard his taunts. My dearest mother was quite angry with him for this and sometimes uneasy. But I could easily console her, and I have the satisfaction to see that I have very often consoled her with success and have made her laugh heartily when she, my dear, dear mother, should be shedding tears on my account. At last Colonel Watson came. I saw him. He said: "I shall think about it", but I never got any help from him. I am sorry to say that it was with difficulty that I could take a trivial note of introduction which, he said in a peremptory voice, was worth one lac of rupees. Now really it makes me laugh.

Then a day was fixed for my departure. At first it was the fourth of August. The matter was now brought to a crisis. The fact that I was to go to England went through the press. My brother was always asked by some persons about my going. Now was the time when he told me to leave off the intention of going, but I would not do that. Then he saw H. H. the Thakoresaheb of Rajkot[1] and requested him to render me some pecuniary help. But no help was obtained therefrom. Then for the last time I saw Thakoresaheb and Colonel Watson. Received a note of introduction from the latter and a photo from the former. Here I must write that the fulsome flattery which I had to practise about this time had quite made me angry. Had it not been for my credulous and dearest brother, I would never have resorted to such a piece of gross flattery. After all the 10th August came and my brother, Sheikh Mehtab, Mr. Nathubhai, Khushalbhai and I started.

I left Rajkot for Bombay. It was Friday night. I was given an address by my school fellows. I was quite uneasy when I rose up to answer the address.[2] When I spoke half of what I had to speak, I began to shake. I hope I will not do it again when I return to India. Before proceeding

[1] Ruler of the State.

[2] *Vide* p. 1, *supra*.

further I must write. Many had come to bid me farewell on the night. Messrs. Kevalram, Chhaganlal (Patwari), Vrajlal, Harishankar, Amulakh, Manekchand, Latib, Popat, Bhanji, Khimji, Ramji, Damodar, Meghji, Ramji Kalidas, Naranji, Ranchhoddas, Manilal were among those who came to bid farewell. Jatashankar Vishvanath and others may be added. The first station was Gondal. There saw Dr. Bhau and took Kapurbhai with us. Nathubhai came as far as Jetpur. At Dhola, Usmanbhai met us and he came as far as Wadhwan. At Dhola, Messrs. Narandas, Pranshankar, Narbheram, Anandrai and Vrajlal had come to bid farewell.

Twenty-first was the day on which I was to leave Bombay. But the difficulties which I had to withstand in Bombay are indescribable. My caste fellows tried their best to prevent me from proceeding further. Almost all of them were in opposition. And at length my brother Khushalbhai and Patwari himself advised me not to go. But I wouldn't give heed to their advice. Then the sea weather was the excuse which delayed my proceeding. My brother and others then left me. But on a sudden I left Bombay on the 4th September 1888. At this time I was very much obliged to Messrs. Jagmohandas, Damodardas and Bechardas. To Shamalji, of course, I owe immense obligation, and what I owe to Ranchhodlal[1] I don't know. It is something more than obligation. Messrs. Jagmohandas, Manshankar, Bechardas, Narayandas Patwari, Dwarkadas, Popatlal, Kashidas, Ranchhodlal, Modi, Thakore, Ravi Shankar, Pherozshah, Ratanshah, Shamalji and some others came to see me off on board the steamer, *Clyde*. Of these, Patwari gave me Rs. 5, Shamalji as many, Modi two, Kashidas one, Narandas two, and some others whom I forget. Mr. Manshankar gave me a silver chain, and then they all of them bade farewell for three years and departed. Before finishing this,

[1] Ranchhodlal Patwari was very close to Gandhiji with whom he was in correspondence. Patwari's father helped him financially to go to England.

I must write that had it been some other man in the same position which I was in, I dare say he would not have been able to see England. The difficulties which I had to withstand have made England dearer to me than she would have been.

4th Sept., 1888. The sea voyage. It was about 5 p.m. when the ship weighed anchor. I was very anxious about the voyage but fortunately it agreed with me. Throughout the voyage I was not at all sea-sick and I had no vomiting. It was for the first time in my life that I sailed in a steamship. I enjoyed the voyage very much. At about 6 o'clock the dinner bell was rung. The steward asked me to go to the table. But I did not go and ate what I had brought with me. I was very much surprised at the liberty which Mr. Mazmudar took with me on the first night. He spoke to me in such a manner as if we were very old acquaintances. He had no black coat. So I gave him mine for dinner. He went to the table. From that night I liked him very much. He entrusted his keys to me, and I began to look upon him as my elder brother from that very night. There was one Maratha doctor with us as far as Aden. He, on the whole, looked like a good man. Thus for two days I lived upon the sweetmeat and fruits which I had on board with me. Then Mr. Mazmudar made an agreement with some boys on board to cook us food. I would never have been able to make such an agreement. There was one Abdul Majid who was a first-class passenger while we were saloon passengers. We enjoyed our dinner cooked by the boy.

Now something about the steamship. I liked the arrangements of the steamer very much. When we sit in the cabins or saloon, we forget that the cabins and the saloons are a part of the ship. We sometimes do not feel the motion at all. The dexterity of the workmen and the sailors was indeed admirable. There were musical instruments in the steamer. I every now and then played upon the piano. There were cards, chessboard and draughts on the board.

The European passengers always played some games at night. The decks are a great relief to the passengers. You are generally tired of sitting in the cabins. On the decks you get fresh air. You can mix with and talk with the fellow passengers if you are bold and have got that stuff. The scene of the sea when the sky is clear is lovely. On one moonlight night I was watching the sea. I could see the moon reflected in the water. On account of the waves, the moon appeared as if she were moving here and there. One dark night when the sky was clear the stars were reflected in the water. The scene around us was very beautiful at that time. I could not at first imagine what that was. They appeared like so many diamonds. But I knew that a diamond could not float. Then I thought that they must be some insects which can only be seen at night. Amidst these reflections I looked at the sky and at once found that it was nothing but stars reflected in waters. I laughed at my folly. This reflection of the stars gives us the idea of fireworks. Fancy yourself to be standing on the storey of a bungalow watching the fireworks performed before you. I very often enjoyed this scene.

For some days I did not speak a word to the fellow-passengers. I always got up at 8 a.m. in the morning, washed my teeth, then went to the w. c. and took my bath. The arrangement of the English water closets astonished a native passenger. We do not get there water and are obliged to use pieces of paper.

After enjoying the sea voyage for about five days, we reached Aden. During these days not a single piece of land or a mountain was seen by us. All of us were tired of the monotony of the voyage and were eager to see land. At last on the morning of the 6th day we saw land. All looked gay and cheerful. At about 11 a.m. we anchored at Aden. Some boys came with small boats. They were great swimmers. Some Europeans threw some money in the waters. They went deep into the waters and

found out the money. I wish I could do so. This was a pretty sight. We, after enjoying this sight for about half an hour, went to see Aden. I must say here that we simply saw the boys finding out the pieces. Ourselves did not throw a single pie. From this day we began to experience the idea of expenses of England. We were three persons and had to pay two rupees for boat hire. The coast was hardly at a mile's distance. We reached the coast in 15 minutes. Then we hired a carriage. We intended to go to see the waterworks which are the only object of interest in Aden. But, unfortunately, the time being up we could not go there. We saw the Camp of Aden. It was good; the buildings were good. They were generally shops. The construction of the buildings was most probably like that of the bungalows in Rajkot and especially the new bungalow of the Political Agent. I could not see any well or any place of fresh water there. I am afraid that perhaps the tanks are the only place for fresh water. The heat of the sun was excessive. I was quite wet with perspiration. This was because we were not far from the Red Sea. What astonished me more was that I saw not a single tree or a green plant. Men rode on mules or asses. We could hire mules if we liked. The camp is situated on the hill. I heard from the boatman, when we returned, that the boys of whom I wrote above are sometimes injured. The legs of some and arms of others are cut off by sea animals. But still the boys, being very poor, sat each in their small boats in which we dare not sit. Each of us had to pay one rupee for the carriage fare. The anchor was weighed at 12 a.m. and we left Aden. But from this day we always saw some land.

In the evening we entered the Red Sea. We began to feel the heat. But I don't think it was so scorching, as is described by some in Bombay. Indeed it was unbearable in the cabins. You cannot expose yourself to the sun. You will not like to stay even for a few minutes in your cabin. But if you are on the deck you are sure to receive

pleasant gales of fresh air. At least I did so. Almost all the passengers slept on the deck and so did I. The heat of the new morning sun, too, you cannot bear. You are always safe when you are on the deck. This heat we generally get for three days. Then we entered the Suez on the fourth night. We could see the lamps in the Suez from a great distance. The Red Sea was sometimes broad and sometimes quite narrow. So narrow that we can see the land on both the sides. Before entering the Suez Canal we passed the Hellsgate. Hellsgate is a piece of water very narrow, bound on both the sides by hills. It is so called because many ships are wrecked at that place. We saw the wreck of a ship in the Red Sea. We stayed at Suez about half an hour. Now it was said that we shall receive cold. Some said that you will require liquor after leaving Aden. But it was false. Now I had begun to talk a little with the fellow passengers. They said, after leaving Aden you will require meat; but it was not so. For the first time in my life I saw the electric light in the front of our ship. It appeared like moonlight. The front part of the ship appeared very beautiful. I think it must appear more beautiful to a man seeing it, placed on some other place, just as we cannot enjoy the beauty of our person as others, i.e. we cannot see it to advantage. The construction of the Suez Canal I am not able to understand. It is indeed marvellous. I cannot think of the genius of a man who invented it. I don't know how he would have done it. It is quite right to say that he has competed with nature. It is not an easy task to join two seas. Only one ship can pass through the Canal at a time. It requires skilful pilotship. The ship sails at a very low motion. We cannot feel its motion. The water of the Canal is quite dirty. I forget its depth. It is as broad as the Aji[1] at Ramnath. You can see men passing by on both the sides. The part near the Canal is barren. The

[1] River near Rajkot.

Canal belongs to the French. Another pilot comes from Ismailia to direct the ship. The French take a certain sum of money for every ship that passes through the Canal. The income must be very large. Besides the electric lamp in the ship, there are seen lights at a distance of some 20 feet on both sides. These are the lights of different colours. The ship has to pass these rows of lights. It takes about 24 hours to pass through the Canal. The beauty of the scene it is beyond my power to describe. You cannot enjoy it unless you see it. Port Said is the terminus of the Canal. Port Said owes its existence to the Suez Canal. We anchored at Port Said in the evening. The ship was to stay there for an hour, but one hour was quite sufficient to see Port Said. Now the currency was English. Indian money is quite useless here. The boat fare is six pence each. A penny is worth one anna. The construction of the Port Said buildings is French. Here we get an idea of the French life. There we saw some coffee restaurants. At the first I thought it was a theatre. But it was nothing but a coffee house. One side we drink coffee or soda or tea or any drink, and on the other we hear music. Some women are playing fiddle bands. A bottle of lemonade in these cafes, as they are called, will cost you 12 pence, which we get for less than a penny in Bombay. Customers are said to hear music gratis. But really it is not so. As soon as the music is finished, a woman with a plate covered with a handkerchief in her hand comes before every customer. That means that you give her something and we are obliged to give something. We visited the cafe and gave 6 pence to the woman. Port Said is nothing but a seat of luxury. There women and men are very cunning. The interpreter will follow to guide you. But you boldly tell him that you do not want him. Port Said is hardly as big as the proper *para*[1] of Rajkot. We left Port Said at 7 p.m.

Among our fellow passengers one Mr. Jeffreys was very

[1] Suburb, in Gujarati.

kind to me. He always told me to go to the table, and take something there, but I would not go. He said, after leaving Brindisi you will feel cold, but it was not so. After 3 days we reached Brindisi at night. The harbour of Brindisi is beautiful. The steamer just touches the coast and you descend to the coast by means of a ladder provided there. It being [dark] I could not see Brindisi much. There every one speaks Italian. Roads of Brindisi are paved with stones. The streets are sloping. They too are paved. Gas is used for lamps. We saw the station of Brindisi. It was not so beautiful as the stations of the B. B. & C. I. Ry. But the railway carriages were far bigger than ours. The traffic was good. When you land at Brindisi, a man would come and ask you, in case you are a black man: "Sir, there is a beautiful girl of 14, follow me, Sir, and I will take you there, the charge is not high, Sir." You are at once puzzled. But be calm and answer boldly that you don't want her and tell the man to go away and thereby you will be safe. If you are in any difficulty at once refer to a policeman just near you, or at once enter a large building which you will surely see. But before you enter it, read the name on the building and make sure that it is open to all. This you will be able to make out at once. Tell the porter there that you are in a difficulty, and he will at once show you what you should do. If you are bold enough, ask the porter to take you to the Chief Officer and you will refer the matter to him. By a large building I mean that it must be belonging to Thos. Cook or Henry King or some such other agents. They will take care of you. Don't be miserly at that time. Pay the porter something. But this means is to be resorted to when you think yourself to be in any danger. But these buildings you will only see on the coasts. If you are far away from the coast you are to find out a policeman and in case of failure, your conscience is the best dictator. We left Brindisi early in the morning.

After about 3 days we reached Malta. The ship anchored

at about 2 p.m. She was to stay there for nearly four hours. Mr. Abdul Majid was to come with us. But somehow or other he was very late. I was quite impatient to go. Mr. Mazmudar said: " Shall we go alone and not wait for Mr. Majid?" I said: "Just as you please. I have no objection." Then, of course, we went alone. On our return, Abdul Majid saw us and said he was very sorry that we went away. Then Mr. Mazmudar said: "It was Gandhi who was impatient and told me not to wait for you." I was really very much offended by such behaviour of Mr. Mazmudar. I did not try to wash off the charge but silently accepted it. But I know that the charge would have been washed off, had I only hinted to Abdul Majid: "Had Mr. Mazmudar really wanted to wait for you, he had better not act according to what I said." And I think this would have been quite sufficient to convince Mr. Abdul Majid of my having no hand in the doing. But at that time I did not mean to do anything of the kind. But from that day I began to entertain very low opinion about Mr. Mazmudar, and from that day I had no real respect for him. Besides there happened two or three things which made me like Mazmudar the less day by day.

Malta is an object of interest. There are many things to see. But the time at our disposal was not sufficient. As I said before, Mr. Mazmudar and myself went to the coast. Here we had received a great rogue. We had to suffer a great loss. We took the number of the boat, and to see the city we hired a carriage. The rogue was with us. After driving for about ½ an hour, we reached St. Juan Church. The church was beautifully built. There we saw some skeletons of eminent persons. They were very old. We gave a shilling to the friend who showed us over the church. Just opposite the church was a statue of St. Juan. Thence drove to the city. The roads were paved. On both sides of the pavement were paved walks for men. The island is very beautiful. There are many grand buildings. Went to see the *Armoury Hall*. This hall was beautifully decorated. There

we saw very old paintings. They were not really paintings but embroidered in. But a stranger would not perceive that it was embroidered work unless told by somebody. In the hall were the arms of old warriors. All of them are worth seeing. Having no record, I do not remember them all. There was a helmet which was 30 lbs. in weight. The carriage of Napoleon Bonaparte was very beautiful. Having given a tip of 6d. to the man who showed us over the hall we returned. We were obliged to take off our hats when we saw the church and the Armoury Hall, as a token of respect. Then we went to the shop of the rogue. He tried to force something upon us. But we wouldn't buy anything. At length Mr. Mazmudar bought the views of Malta for 2/6. Here the rogue gave us an interpreter and himself did not come with us. The interpreter was a very good man. He drove us to the orange gardens. We saw the garden. I did not like the gardens at all. I like our public park of Rajkot better than the gardens. If there was anything worth seeing for me, it was the golden and red fishes in a small enclosure of water. Thence we returned to the town, went to a hotel. Mr. Mazmudar took some potatoes and tea. On our way we met an Indian. Mr. Mazmudar being a very bold man spoke to the Indian. On further talk with him it was found that he was the brother of a man who had a shop in Malta. We at once went to the shop. Mr. Mazmudar had a good chat with the shopkeeper. We made some purchases there and spent two hours in the shop. So we could not see much of Malta. We saw another church. That too was very beautiful and worth seeing. We had to see the opera house but we had no time to do that. We took leave of the gentleman who gave Mr. Mazmudar his card to his brother in London. On our return, the rogue again met us and came with us at 6 p.m. We reached the coast and paid the rogue, the good interpreter and the carriageman. We had a quarrel about the fare with the boatman. The result was, of course, in favour of the boatman. Here we

were cheated a good deal.

The steamer *Clyde* left at 7 p.m. After 3 days' voyage we reached Gibraltar at 12 p.m. The ship remained there the whole night. I had a good mind to see Gibraltar, so got up early in the morning and awakened Mazmudar and asked him whether he would come with me to the shore or not. He said he would. Then I went to Mr. Majid and awoke him. We three went to the shore. The time at our disposal was only 1½ hours. It being the dawn of the day all the shops were shut. It is said that Gibraltar being a free port smoking is very cheap. Gibraltar is built upon a rock. On the top is the fortification which to our great sorrow we could not see. The houses are in rows. In order to go from the first row to the second, we are obliged to ascend certain steps. I liked it very much. The construction was beautiful. Roads were paved. Having no time we were soon obliged to return. The ship weighed anchor at 8.30 a.m.

In 3 days we reached Plymouth at 11 p.m. Now was the proper time for cold. Each and every passenger said that we would die without meat and drink but nothing of the kind happened to us. Indeed it was pretty well cold. We were also told about the storm but could not see the storm. Really I was very anxious to see it but could not. It being night we could see nothing of Plymouth. We had dense fog there. At length the ship left for London. In 24 hours we reached London; left the steamer and reached Victoria Hotel via Tilbury station on the 28th October, 1888, at 4 p.m.

28th October, 1888, Saturday to 23rd November, Friday

Mr. Mazmudar, Mr. Abdul Majid and I reached the Victoria Hotel. Mr. Abdul Majid told in a dignified air to the porter of the Victoria Hotel to give our cabman the proper fare. Mr. Abdul Majid thought very highly of himself, but let me write here that the dress which he had put on was perhaps worse than that of the porter. He did not take care of the luggage too, and as if he had been in London

for a long time stepped into the hotel. I was quite dazzled by the splendour of the hotel. I had never in my life seen such a pomp. My business was simply to follow the two friends in silence. There was all over electric lights. We were admitted into a room. There Mr. Majid at once went. The Manager at once asked him whether he would choose second floor or not. Mr. Majid thinking it below his dignity to inquire about the daily rent said yes. The Manager at once gave us a bill of 6s. each per day and a boy was sent with us. I was all the while smiling within myself. Then we were to go to the second floor by a lift. I did not know what it was. The boy at once touched something which I thought was lock of the door. But as I afterwards came to know it was the bell and he rang in order to tell the waiter to bring the lift. The doors were opened and I thought that was a room in which we were to sit for some time. But to my great surprise we were brought to the second floor.

[*Incomplete*]

5. *LETTER TO MR. LELY*[1]

LONDON,
December, 1888

DEAR SIR,

You will know me by looking at the note which, you said, when I had the opportunity of seeing you, you would preserve.

At that time I had requested you to render to me some pecuniary aid as a means to enable me to proceed to England; but unfortunately you were in a hurry to leave; so I had not the sufficient time to say all that I had to say.

[1] Draft of a letter to Mr. Lely sent by Gandhiji to his elder brother, Lakshmidas Gandhi, for approval.

I was at that time very impatient to proceed to England. So I left India on the 4th of September, 1888, with what little money I had at that time. What my father left for us three brothers was indeed very little. However, trusting that nearly 666£, which was all my brother could with great difficulty spare for me, would be sufficient for my three years' stay in London, I left India for receiving legal education in England. I knew while in India that education and living in London were very expensive. But now from two months' experience in London I find that they are more so than they appeared to be in India.

In order to live here comfortably and to receive good education, I shall require an extra help of 400£. I am a native of Porbandar and as such that is the only place I can look up to for such help.

During the late rule of H. H. the Rana Saheb, very little encouragement was given to education. But we can naturally expect that education must be encouraged under the English Administration. I am one who can take advantage of such encouragement.

I hope, therefore, that you may please render me some pecuniary help and thereby confer great and much needed obligation on me.

I have asked my brother Laxmidas Gandhi to receive [it] and am sending him a note to see you in person if necessary.

Trusting you will be induced to grant my request.

With best respects,

I beg to remain,
yours,
M. K. GANDHI

I prepared this draft of a letter three weeks ago and have been thinking over it ever since. I am inclined to think that he will not send any reply. I therefore send the draft for your consideration. I have not asked for the whole amount, as it would be unreasonable. Again he

may think that if I had been absolutely dependent upon his help, I would not have proceeded to England without making sure of it. But having found on arrival here that I shall need more funds, I have asked for only the additional amount. I have not offered to bind myself in any way, because I did not think it necessary. Nor did I feel that it was proper to bind myself for an amount which will cover only part of my expenses. Besides, if . . .[1]

[*Incomplete*]

Mahatma, Vol. I; from a photostat.

6. *LETTER TO COL. J. W. WATSON*

[*December 1888*]

COLONEL J. W. WATSON
Political Agent
KATHIAWAR

DEAR SIR,

It is about six or seven weeks since I landed in this country. By this time, I am comfortably settled and have fairly begun my studies. I have joined the Inner Temple for my legal course.

You are well aware that English life is very expensive and, from what little experience I have had of it, I find that it is more so than I could persuade myself to believe while I was in India. My means as you know are very limited. I don't think I can go through a course of three years satisfactorily without some extraneous help. When I remember that you took a great deal of interest in my father and had extended your hand of friendship to him, I have very little doubt that you will take the

[1] This covering note, originally written in Gujarati, was addressed to Lakshmidas Gandhi while forwarding the above draft to him.

same interest in what concerns him and I feel confident that you will try your best to procure me some substantial help which would facilitate my course of study in this country. You will thus confer a great and much needed obligation upon me.

I saw Dr. Butler a few days ago. He is very kind to me and has promised to give me all assistance he can.

The weather so far has not been very severe. I am doing very well.

With best respects,

I beg to remain,
Dear Sir,
yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma, Vol I; from a photostat.

7. *INDIAN VEGETARIANS*

These articles, probably the first written by Gandhiji, were published in The Vegetarian.

I

India is inhabited by twenty-five millions[1] of people of various castes and creeds. The very common belief among the Englishmen who have not been to India, or who have taken very little interest in Indian matters, is that all the Indians are born Vegetarians. Now this is true only in part. Indian people are divided into three main divisions, viz., the Hindus, the Mahomedans, and the Parsis.

The Hindus are again divided into four chief castes, viz., the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas, and the Shudras. Of all these, in theory, only the Brahmins and the Vaishyas are pure Vegetarians. But in practice

[1] Obviously a typographical error for two hundred and fifty millions.

almost all the Indians are Vegetarians. Some are so voluntarily, and others compulsorily. The latter, though always willing to take, are yet too poor to buy meat. This statement will be borne out by the fact that there are thousands in India who have to live on one pice (⅛d.) a day. These live on bread and salt, a heavily taxed article; for even in a poverty-stricken country like India, it will be very difficult, if not utterly impossible, to get eatable flesh-meat for ⅛d.

The question who are Vegetarians in India being disposed of, the natural question will be what is Vegetarianism as practised by them? To begin with, Indian Vegetarianism does not mean the V.E.M.[1] diet. The Indians, i.e. the Indian Vegetarians, decline to take, besides fish, flesh and fowl, eggs, for they argue that to eat an egg is equivalent to killing life; since an egg, if left undisturbed would, prima facie, become a fowl. But, unlike some of the Vegetarian extremists here, they not only do not abstain from milk and butter, but consider them sacred enough to be used on what are called "fruit-days", which occur every fortnight, and which are generally observed by the high caste Hindus; because, as they put it, they do not kill the cow in taking milk from her. And certainly the milking of a cow, which, by the way, has been the subject of painting and poetry, cannot shock the most delicate feelings as would the slaughtering of her. It may be worth mentioning *en passant* that the cow is an object of worship among the Hindus, and a movement set on foot to prevent the cows from being shipped off for the purposes of slaughter is progressing rapidly.

The Vegetarian, 7-2-1891

II

Indian Vegetarians' food generally varies with the part they live in. Thus in Bengal the staple article of food is

[1] V.E.M. probably means Vegetarianism excluding milk.

rice, while in the Bombay Presidency it is wheat.

All the Indians generally—and the grown up persons particularly, and among them the high caste Hindus—take two meals a day with a glass or two of water between the meals whenever they feel thirsty. The first meal they take at about 10 a.m., which would correspond to the English dinner, and the second meal at about 8 p.m., which would correspond to supper so far as the name goes, though in reality, it is a substantial meal. From the above it will have been seen that there is no breakfast—which seeing that the Indians generally rise at 6 o'clock, and even as early as four or five o'clock in the morning, they would seem to require—nor the ordinary midday meal. Some of the readers will no doubt wonder how the Indians go about without anything to eat for nine hours after their first meal. This may be explained in two ways, viz., first, the habit is second nature. Their religion commands some, and employment or custom compels others, to take not more than two meals in one day. Secondly, the climate of India, which except in some parts is very hot, will account for the habit. For even in England, it appears that the same quantity of food is not required in summer as in winter. Unlike the English, the Indians do not take each dish separately, but they mix many things together. Among some of the Hindus it is one of the requirements of their religion to mix all their food together. Moreover, every dish is elaborately prepared. In fact they don't believe in plain boiled vegetables, but must have them flavoured with plenty of condiments, e.g., pepper, salt, cloves, turmeric, mustard seed, and various other things for which it would be difficult to find English names unless they be those used in medicine.

The first meal consists generally of bread or rather cakes—of which more hereafter—some pulse, e.g., peas, haricot beans, etc., and two or three green vegetables cooked together, or separately, followed by rice and pulse cooked

in water, and flavoured with various spices. After this, some take milk and rice, or simply milk, or curdled milk, or even whey, especially in summer.

The second meal, i.e., the supper, consists of much the same things as the first one, but the quantity is less and the vegetables fewer at this meal. Milk is more liberally used at this meal. The reader should be reminded that this is not the food that the Indians invariably use nor should he think that the above will be the typical dishes all over India and among all classes. Thus, for example, no sweets are mentioned in the specimen meals while they are sure to be used among the well-to-do classes at least once a week. Moreover, while, as said above, wheat preponderates over rice in the Bombay Presidency, in Bengal rice gets the better of wheat. So also with regard to the third exception which must prove the rule, the food among the labouring class is different from what is given above. To mention all the varieties would be to fill up volumes and to do so would, it is to be feared, divest the article of all interest.

Butter, or if you please, clarified butter, is much more used for culinary purposes than in England or, it may be, even in Europe. And according to a doctor of some authority, if it would do no good, much use of butter, in a hot climate like that of India would do no harm such as it might do in a cold climate like that of England.

It will perhaps strike the reader that the fruit, yes, the all-important fruit, is sadly conspicuous by its absence in the above-mentioned specimen dishes. Some, among many of the reasons, are that the Indians do not know the proper value of fruit, that the poor people cannot afford to buy good fruit, and that good fruit is not available all over India, except in large cities. Indeed, there are certain fruits, not to be found here, which are used by all classes in India; but alas, these are used as superficial things, not as food, and no one knows their value

chemically, because no one takes the trouble to analyse them.

The Vegetarian, 14-2-1891

III

In the previous article "more hereafter" was promised about the cakes. These cakes are generally made of wheat-flour. Wheat is first ground in a handmill—a simple contrivance to reduce the wheat to powder—not a mill requiring machinery. This powdered wheat is passed through a sieve with large holes, so that the coarsest bran is left out. Indeed, among the poor classes it is not passed through the sieve at all. Thus the flour, though not the same as that used by the Vegetarians here, is far superior to the ordinary flour that is here used for the much abused white bread. Some clarified butter, i.e. butter boiled and passed through a sieve—sometimes a useless process when the butter is quite pure—and then allowed to become cool—say a tea-spoonful to a pound of flour—is mixed with the flour, a sufficient quantity of water is poured on it, and then it is kneaded with the hands until it forms itself into one homogeneous mass. This lump is divided into small equal parts, each as big as a tangerine. These are rolled into thin circular pieces about six inches in diameter with a wooden stick made specially for the purpose. Each piece is separately and thoroughly baked in a flat dish. It takes from five to seven minutes to bake one cake. This cake is eaten while hot with butter, and has a very nice flavour. It may be, and is, eaten even quite cold. What meat is to the ordinary Englishman, the cake is to the Indian, be he a Vegetarian or a meat-eater, for in India a meat-eater does not, in the writer's opinion, regard his meat as an absolute necessity, but takes it rather as a side dish to help him, so to speak, in eating the cakes.

Such in outline, and only in outline, is the ordinary food of a well-to-do Indian Vegetarian. Now a question may be asked, "Has not the British Rule effected any change in the habits of the Indian people?" So far as the food and drink are concerned "yes", and "no". No, because ordinary men and women have stuck to their original food and the number of meals. Yes, because those who have learnt a little bit of English have picked up English ideas here and there, but this change too — whether it is for the worse or for the better must be left to the reader to judge—is not very perceptible.

The last-mentioned class have begun to believe in breakfast, which usually consists of a cup or two of tea. Now this brings us to the question of drink. The drinking of tea and coffee, by the so-called educated Indians, chiefly due to the British Rule, may be passed over with the briefest notice. The most that tea and coffee can do is to cause a little extra expense, and general debility of health when indulged in to excess, but one of the most greatly-felt evils of the British Rule is the importation of alcohol—that enemy of mankind, that curse of civilization—in some form or another. The measure of the evil wrought by this borrowed habit will be properly gauged by the reader when he is told that the enemy has spread throughout the length and breadth of India, in spite of the religious prohibition; for even the touch of a bottle containing alcohol pollutes the Mahomedan, according to his religion, and the religion of the Hindu strictly prohibits the use of alcohol in any form whatever, and yet, alas! the Government, it seems, instead of stopping, are aiding and abetting the spread of alcohol. The poor there, as everywhere, are the greatest sufferers. It is they who spend what little they earn in buying alcohol instead of buying good food and other necessaries. It is that wretched poor man who has to starve his family, who has to break the sacred trust of looking after his

children, if any, in order to drink himself into misery and premature death. Here be it said to the credit of Mr. Caine, the ex-Member for Barrow, that he, undaunted, is still carrying on his admirable crusade against the spread of the evil, but what can the energy of one man, however powerful, do against the inaction of an apathetic and dormant Government!

The Vegetarian, 21-2-1891

IV

After having known who are Vegetarians in India, and what they generally eat, the reader will be able to judge from the following facts how hollow and baseless are the arguments advanced by some people regarding the weak constitutions of the Vegetarian Hindus.

One thing often said about the Indian Vegetarians is that they are physically very feeble, and that, therefore, Vegetarianism is not compatible with bodily strength.

Now, if it can be proved that generally in India the Vegetarians are as strong as, if not stronger than the Indian meat-eaters, and for that matter even Englishmen, and moreover, that where weakness exists it can be ascribed to many other reasons than that of non-flesh diet, the whole structure on which the above argument is based falls to the ground.

It must at the outset be admitted that the Hindus as a rule are notoriously weak; but an unbiased person—a meat-eater—who knows India and her people even superficially will tell you that there are many other causes incessantly at work to account for the proverbial weakness. One of the most important reasons, if not *the* most important one, is the wretched custom of infant marriages and its attendant evils. Generally, children when they reach the great age of nine are burdened with the fetters of married life. In many cases they are married

at a still younger age and in some cases they are betrothed while yet unborn. Thus one woman would promise to marry her child, if male, to another's, if female, and vice versa. Of course in the two latter cases consummation does not take place before they are ten or eleven years old. Cases are recorded in which a wife of twelve had a child by a husband of sixteen or seventeen. Will not these marriages tell upon the strongest constitutions?

Now fancy how weak the progeny of such marriages must be. Then look at the cares such a couple have to undergo. Suppose a boy of eleven is married to a girl of about the same age. Thus at a time when the boy should be, and is, ignorant of what it is to be a husband, he has a wife forced on him. He is, of course, attending his school. In addition to the drudgery at school he has his child-wife to look after. He has not actually to maintain her, for in India a son when married does not necessarily separate from his parents unless he be at sixes and sevens[1] with them; but he has to do everything short of that. Then about six years after marriage he has a son, probably he has not yet finished his studies, and he has to think of earning money not only to maintain himself but his wife and child, for he cannot expect to pass his whole life with his father, and even granting that he may, he should certainly be expected to contribute something towards his wife's and his child's maintenance. Will not the mere knowledge of his duty prey upon his mind and thus undermine his health? Can anyone dare to say that this will not shatter a most robust constitution? But one may well argue that if that boy, in the above example, had eaten flesh-meat he would have kept stronger than he did. A reply to such an argument is to be found from those Kshatriya princes who in spite of their meat diet are very weak owing to debauchery.

[1] Gandhiji perhaps means, 'at variance'.

Then the shepherds in India afford a good example of how strong an Indian Vegetarian can be where other opposite agencies are not at work. An Indian shepherd is a finely built man of herculean constitution. He, with his thick, strong cudgel, would be a match for any ordinary European with his sword. Cases are recorded of shepherds having killed or driven away tigers and lions with their cudgels. "But," said a friend one day, "this is an example of men living in the rude and natural state. In the present highly artificial state of society you require something more than mere cabbage and peas. Your shepherd lacks intelligence, he reads no books, etc. etc." The one and only answer to this was, and is, that the Vegetarian shepherd would be equal to, if not more than a match for, a meat-eating shepherd. Thus there is a comparison between a Vegetarian of one class and a meat-eater of the same class. It is a comparison between strength and strength, and not between strength and strength plus intelligence, for my attempt for the moment is simply to disprove that Indian Vegetarians are physically weak on account of their Vegetarianism.

Eat what food you will, it is impossible, it seems, to make physical and mental strength go together except, perhaps, in rare cases. The law of compensation will require that what is gained in mental power must be lost in bodily power. A Samson cannot be a Gladstone. And granting the argument that a substitute is required for vegetables in the present state of society, is it conclusively proved that flesh or meat is that substitute?

Then take the case of the Kshatriyas, the so-called warlike race in India. They are, of course, meat-eaters and how few of them there are who have wielded a sword! Far be it from me to say that they as a race are very weak. So long as Pruthuraj and Bhim and all of their type—not to go to the olden times—are remembered, he will be a fool who would have it believed that they are a

weak race. But now it is a sad fact that they have degenerated. The truly warlike people, among others, are the people of the North-western provinces, known as Bhayas. They subsist on wheat, pulse, and greens. They are the guardians of peace, they are largely employed in the native armies.

From the above facts it is easy to see that Vegetarianism is not only not injurious, but on the contrary is conducive to bodily strength and that attributing the Hindu weakness to Vegetarianism is simply based on a fallacy.

The Vegetarian, 28-2-1891

V

We saw in the last article that the bodily weakness of the Hindu Vegetarians was attributable to other causes than their diet, and also that the shepherds who were Vegetarians were as strong as meat-eaters. This shepherd being a very good specimen of a Vegetarian, we may with profit examine his way of living; but before proceeding further, the reader may be told that what follows does not apply to all the Indian shepherds. It applies to the shepherds of a certain part of India. Just as the habits of the people in Scotland would be different from those of the people in England, so also would the habits of the people living in one part of India be different from those of the people living in another part.

The Indian shepherd then gets up generally at five o'clock in the morning. The first thing he does, if he is a pious shepherd, is to offer some prayers to his God. Then he does his toilet which consists in washing his mouth and face. I may be allowed here to digress for a while to acquaint the reader with the brush an Indian uses for his teeth. The brush is nothing more than a branch of a thorny tree called *babul*; one branch is cut up into pieces about a foot long. Of course, all the thorns

are removed. The Indian crushes one end of the stick between his teeth till it is soft enough to brush his teeth. Thus he makes for himself every day a new and home-made brush. When he has well brushed his teeth and made them pearl white he splits the stick into two, and after bending one part into a curve scrapes his tongue. This process of brushing probably accounts for the strong and beautiful teeth of the average Indian. It is perhaps superfluous to add that he uses no tooth powder. Old persons when their teeth are not strong enough to crush the stick use a small hammer. The whole process does not take more than twenty or twenty-five minutes.

To return to the shepherd, he then takes his breakfast consisting of a thick cake made of millet—an Anglo-Indian name for *bajari*, a kind of corn much used in India instead of, or in addition to, wheat—clarified butter and molasses. At about eight or nine o'clock in the morning he goes to pasture the cattle placed under his superintendence. The place of pasture is generally two or three miles from his town. It is a hilly tract of land studded with a green carpet of luxuriant foliage. Thus he has the unique advantage of enjoying the freshest air with natural scenery thrown in. While the cattle are roaming about, he whiles away his time in singing or talking to his companion who may be his wife, brother or some other relation. At about twelve o'clock he takes his lunch, which he always carries with him. It consists of the ever present cakes, clarified butter, one vegetable, or some pulse, or instead, or in addition, some pickle and fresh milk directly taken from the cow. Then at about two or three o'clock he not unfrequently takes a nap for about half an hour under some shady tree. This short sleep gives him relief from the heat of the scorching sun. At six he returns home, at seven he has supper, for which he takes some hot cakes, pulse or vegetables, winds up with rice and milk, or rice and whey. After

doing some household business, which often means a pleasant chat with the family members, he goes to bed at ten o'clock. He sleeps either in the open air, or in a hut which is sometimes overcrowded. He resorts to the hut in winter or in the rainy season. It may be worthy of remark that these huts, even though miserable in appearance and often without any windows, are not air tight. Being constructed in a rude state their doors are made, not as a protection against draughts or wind, but against burglars. It cannot, however, be denied that there is much room for improvement in the huts.

Such then is the living of a well-to-do shepherd. His, in many respects, is an ideal mode of life. He is perforce regular in his habits, is out of doors during the greater part of his time, while out he breathes the purest air, has his due amount of exercise, has good and nourishing food and last but not least, is free from many cares which are frequently productive of weak constitutions.

The Vegetarian, 7-3-1891

VI

The only flaw that can be found in his mode of living is the paucity of baths. In a hot climate baths are very useful. While a Brahmin would have his bath twice a day, and a Vaishya once a day, a shepherd would have only one bath a week. I shall here again digress to explain the manner in which the Indian takes his baths. Generally, he has his baths in the river flowing near his town, but if he is too idle to go to the river, or is afraid of being drowned, or if there is no river near his town, he has his baths at home. There is no bath into which he can plunge. He takes water from a large vessel, placed near him, with a goblet and pours it over his body, because he believes that the moment you plunge into stagnant water you render it impure, and there-

fore, unfit for further use. For the same reason he would not even wash his hands in a basin, but have someone to pour it over his hands or do it himself by holding the goblet between his arms.

But to return, the paucity of the baths does not, it seems, materially affect his health; while it is obvious that if the Brahmin were to go without his baths even for a day, he would feel very uncomfortable, and if he were to continue not taking them a little longer, he would very soon become ill.

This is, I suppose, an instance of many things which, otherwise inexplicable, can be accounted for by habit. Thus while a scavenger, in pursuing his employment keeps good health, any ordinary person trying to do the same will be face to face with death. Death would soon be knocking at the door of a delicately nurtured lord trying to imitate an East End labourer.

I cannot help here giving a fable or anecdote which is exactly to the point. A king fell in love with a female tooth-brush seller, who was a very Venus in beauty. As might naturally be expected she was ordered to be placed in the king's palace. She was, in fact, placed in the lap of luxury. She had the best food, the best clothes, in short, everything of the best. And lo! in proportion to the luxury, her health began to fail. Scores of physicians were in attendance, but all the drugs most regularly administered proved of no avail. Meanwhile a shrewd physician found out the real cause of all the illness. He said that she was possessed by evil spirits. Therefore, in order to satisfy them, he ordered some pieces of old cakes to be set, together with fruit in each of her many rooms. They were to disappear in as many days as there were rooms, and with them, he said, the illness would disappear. And it was so. Of course the cakes were consumed by the poor queen.

Now this shows the mastery that habit gets over men. So I think the paucity of baths does not greatly harm the shepherd.

The result of this mode of living was partially noticed in the last article, viz., the Vegetarian shepherd is physically strong. He is also long-lived. I know a shepherdess who was more than one hundred years old in 1888. When I last saw her her eyesight was very good. Her memory was fresh. She could recollect things that she had seen in her childhood. She could walk with a stick to support her. I hope she is still living.

Besides, the shepherd's figure is symmetrical. It is very rare to see any deformity in him. Without being fierce like a tiger, he is yet strong and brave and as docile as a lamb. Without being awe-inspiring, his stature is commanding. Altogether, the Indian shepherd is a very fine specimen of a Vegetarian, and will compare very favourably with any meat-eater so far as bodily strength goes.

The Vegetarian, 14-3-1891

8. SOME INDIAN FESTIVALS

I

At this Easter time I should have liked to write something on the holidays which correspond to the Easter in point of time; but these holidays with their painful associations not being the greatest Hindu festival may very properly give way to the *Divali* holidays which are far superior in importance and grandeur to the former.

Divali, which may be termed the Hindu Christmas, occurs at the end of the Hindu year, i.e., during the month of November. It is both a social and religious holiday. It spreads over nearly a month. The first day of the month of *Ashwin* (the twelfth month of the Hindu year) heralds the approach of the grand festival when the children let off their first fireworks. The first nine days are called *Nava Rati* (nine nights).

These days are chiefly marked by *garbis*. Some twenty or thirty, and even more people form themselves into a large circle, in the centre is placed a huge lamp-post tastefully constructed and illuminated all round, in the centre also sits a man with his tabors reciting some popular verses. The people forming the circle repeat the verses, keeping time to them with claps of hands. While repeating the verses, they move round the lamp-post, at the same time stooping down in a half-bending posture. It is very often a great treat to hear these *garbis*.

It may be remarked that girls—much less women—never take part in them. Of course they may have their own *garbis* where men would be excluded. In some families the custom of half-fasting prevails. It is sufficient if one member only of the family fasts. The fasting man has only one meal a day, and that, too, in the evening. Moreover, he is not allowed any corn or pulse, but is restricted to fruit, milk, and root vegetables such as potatoes, etc.

The tenth day of the month is called *Dashara*, when friends meet and feast one another. It is also customary to make presents of sweets to one's friends, and especially patrons or superiors. Except on the *Dashara* holiday all the amusements are carried on at night, while the ordinary daily pursuits are attended to in the daytime. After the *Dashara* everything is comparatively quiet for about a fortnight, except that the ladies are making preparations for the approaching grand day, by cooking and baking sweets, cakes, etc., for, in India, women of the highest class would not mind cooking. In fact, it is an accomplishment which every lady is supposed to possess.

Thus, spending the evenings in feasting and singing, we reach the thirteenth day of the dark half of the month *Ashwin*. (In India every month is divided into two parts, the dark half and the bright half, the full-moon day and the new-moon day being starting points; thus, the day following the full-moon day is the first day of the dark half of a month,

and so on.) The thirteenth day and the three following days are wholly devoted to amusements and enjoyment. The thirteenth day is called *Dhanterash*, i.e., the thirteenth day set apart for the worship of "Laxmi", the goddess of wealth. Rich people collect different kinds of jewels, precious stones, coins, etc., and put them carefully into a box. These they never use for any other purpose than that of worship. Each year an addition is made to this collection. The worship, i.e., the external worship—for who, save a select few, is there who does not at heart covet, or in other words, worship money?—consists in washing the money with water and milk, and then decorating it with flowers and *kum-kum*, i.e., red ochre.

The fourteenth day is called *Kali-Chaudash;* but this day people get up before the break of day, and even the laziest person is required to take a good bath; the mother even compels her little children to take a bath, though it is the winter season. On the night of *Kali-Chaudash*, cemeteries are supposed to be visited by a procession of ghosts. Persons affecting to believe in ghosts would go to these places to see their ghost friends. Timid ones would not stir out of their houses lest they should see a ghost.

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II

But lo! now is the morning of the fifteenth day, *Divali* proper. The greatest fireworks are let off on the *Divali* day. No one is willing to part with his money on this day. He will neither borrow nor lend. All the purchases are supposed to have been finished the previous day.

You are standing near the corner of a public road. Mark the shepherd trotting onward in his milk-white suit, worn for the first time, with his long beard turned up beside his face and fastened under his turban, singing some broken verses. A herd of cows, with their horns painted red and

green and mounted with silver, follows him. Soon after you see a crowd of little maids, with small earthen vessels resting on cushions placed on their heads. You wonder what those vessels contain. Your doubt is soon solved by that careless maid spilling some milk from her vessel. Then observe that big man with white whiskers and a big white turban, with a long reed pen thrust into his turban. He has a long scarf wound round his waist with a silver inkstand adjusted in the scarf. He, you must know, is a great banker. Thus you see different sorts of persons leisurely going along, full of joy and mirth.

The night comes. The streets are resplendent with dazzling illuminations; dazzling indeed to a person who has never seen Regent Street or Oxford Street, but by no means to be compared with the scale on which illuminations are carried out at the Crystal Palace, except in large towns like Bombay. Men, women and children wear their best costumes, almost all of various colours, and so form a wonderfully bizarre effect, which harmonizes into kaleidoscopic beauty. This is also the night for worshipping Saraswati, the goddess of learning. Merchants start their new ledgers, by making the first entry. The officiating priest, the ubiquitous Brahmin, mutters some prayers and invokes the goddess. At the end of the worship, the children, who are only too impatient, set the fireworks ablaze; and as this worship generally takes place at a fixed time, the streets resound with the popping and fizzing and cracking of fireworks. Pious people then go to the temples, but here too there is nothing to be seen but mirth and glee, dazzling light and splendour.

The following day, i.e., the new year's day, is the day of paying and receiving visits. Kitchen fires are put out on this day, so that people eat the cold food which has been previously prepared. But the glutton by no means starves, for there is such profusion that though he eats and eats again there is yet plenty and to spare. Well-to-do classes buy and

cook every sort of vegetables, corn and pulse, and taste them all on the new year's day.

The second day of the new year is comparatively a quiet day. Kitchen fires are now re-lighted. Light food is generally taken after the heavy meals of the previous days. There is no display of fireworks except by some mischievous children. Illumination, too, is on a smaller scale. With the second day the *Divali* holidays are practically over.

Let us see how these holidays affect society, and how many desirable things people do unwittingly. Generally, all the family members try to meet together for the holidays at their chief place of residence. The husband always tries to get home to his wife again, even though his business may have taken him away the whole of the previous year. The father travels a great distance to meet his children. The son, if abroad, comes back from his school and so a general reunion always takes place. Then all who can afford it have new suits of clothes. Among the richer classes ornaments, too, are ordered especially for the occasion. Even old family quarrels are patched up. At any rate a serious attempt is made to do so. Houses are repaired and whitewashed. Old furniture, which was lying packed up in a wooden case, is taken out, cleaned, and used for decorating the rooms for the time being. Old debts, if any, are paid up whenever possible. Everyone is supposed to buy some new thing, which almost always takes the form of a metallic vessel, or some such thing, for the new year's day. Alms are freely given. Persons not very careful about offering prayers or visiting temples are now doing both.

On holidays no one is to quarrel with or swear at any other—a pernicious habit very much in vogue, particularly among the lower classes. In a word, everything is quiet and joyful. Life, instead of being burdensome, is perfectly enjoyable. It will be easily seen that good and far-reaching consequences cannot fail to flow from such holidays, which some cry down as a relic of superstition

and tomfoolery, though in reality they are a boon to mankind, and tend to relieve a great deal the dull monotony of life among the toiling millions.

Though the *Divali* holidays are common to the whole of India, the mode of observing them varies in point of details in different parts. Moreover, this is but an imperfect description of the greatest festival of the Hindus. And it must not be supposed that there is no abusing of the holidays. Like every other thing, this festival, too, may have, and probably has, its black side, but that had better be left alone. Certainly the good that it does far outweighs the evil.

The Vegetarian, 4-4-1891

III

Next in importance to the *Divali* holidays are the *Holi* holidays, which were alluded to in *The Vegetarian* of the 28th March.

Holi holidays, as will be remembered, correspond to Easter in point of time. *Holi* takes place on the full moon day of the fifth month, *Falgun*, of the Hindu year. This is just the Spring-time. Trees are budding forth. Warm clothes are put off. Light clothes are the fashion. That the Spring has come is even more manifest when we have a peep at one of the temples. The moment you enter a temple (and you must be a Hindu in order to gain admittance thereinto), you smell nothing but sweet flowers. Pious persons are sitting on the steps, making garlands for *Thakorji* (god). Among the flowers you see beautiful roses, *champeli*, *moghra*, etc. When the doors are flung open for *darshan* (literally, seeing), you observe the fountains in full play. You enjoy soft and fragrant breezes. *Thakorji* has worn light costumes of delicate shades. Piles of flowers before him, and garlands round his neck almost hide him from your view. He is swung to and fro. The swing, too, is covered with green leaves sprinkled with fragrant waters.

Outside the temple the sight is not edifying. You here meet with nothing but obscene language during the fortnight preceding the *Holi*. In small villages, it is difficult for ladies to appear without being bespattered with mud. They are the subject of obscene remarks. The same treatment is meted out to men without distinction. People form themselves into small parties. Then one party competes with another in using obscene language and singing obscene songs. All persons—men and children, but not women—take part in these revolting contests.

Indeed, it is not considered bad taste to use obscene words during this season. In places where people are steeped in ignorance they even pelt one another. They paint obscene words on your clothes, and if you wear a white garment and go out, you are sure to return home with plenty of mud about you. This reaches its climax on the *Holi* day. Whether you are in the house or out of it, obscene words are jarring on your ears. If you happen to visit a friend, you are sure to be bathed in foul water, or in fragrant water as the case may be.

In the evening, a big pile of wood or dried cow-dung is made and set on fire. These piles are often as high as twenty feet or more. And the pieces of wood used are so thick that the fire is not extinguished for seven or eight days. On the day following, people heat water on these fires and bathe with it.

So far I have spoken of the way in which the *Holi* holidays are abused. It is a relief to be able to say that with the progress of education and civilisation such scenes are slowly, though surely, dying out. But the richer and refined classes use these holidays in a very decent way. Coloured water and fragrant waters take the place of mud. Throwing pails of water is replaced here by a little sprinkling only. Orange-coloured water is most used during these days. It is made by boiling dried flowers, called *kesuda*, which have the colour of an orange. Rose water, too, is used

where people can afford it. Friends and relations meet and feast one another, and thus enjoy the Spring in merriment.

In many respects, the *Divali* holidays present a beautiful contrast to the, for the most part, unholy *Holi* holidays. *Divali* holidays begin soon after the monsoon season which is also the time of fasting. So the feasting during the *Divali* holidays is all the more enjoyable. While the *Holi* holidays follow the winter which is the time for taking concentrated foods of all sorts, such foods are left off during the *Holi* holidays. Obscene language of *Holi* follows the most sacred songs of the *Divali*. Then again people begin to wear winter clothes in the *Divali*, while they put these off in the *Holi*. The *Divali* proper takes place on the fifteenth day of the dark half of the month *Ashwin* and consequently there is much illumination; while on account of the *Holi* taking place on the full-moon day, illumination would be out of place.

The Vegetarian, 25-4-1891

9. THE FOODS OF INDIA

The following extract appears in the issue of The Vegetarian, *of May 6, 1891 : "Saturday, May 2nd, Bloomsbury Hall, Hart Street, Bloomsbury.......Mrs. Harrison was followed by Mr. M. K. Gandhi (a Brahmin from the Bombay Presidency). After congratulating the previous speaker and apologising for his paper, which was entitled 'The Foods of India', he began to read it. He was rather nervous in the beginning." The text given here is of the paper re-read at the Portsmouth meeting of the Vegetarian Society and published in* The Vegetarian Messenger *of June 1, 1891.*

Before I proceed to the subject of my address I should like to tell you what are my qualifications for undertaking the task. When Mill wrote the *History of India*, he, in his most interesting preface, pointed out how he was qualified

to write the book, though he had never been to India, and was ignorant of the Indian languages. So I think that in following his example, I shall be doing just what I ought to do. Of course, the very idea of referring to one's qualifications for any task argues some sort of unfitness on the part of the speaker or writer, and I confess that I am not *the* person to speak upon the "Foods of India". I have undertaken the task not because I am thoroughly competent to speak on the subject but because I thought I would thereby be doing a service to the cause that both you and I have at heart. My remarks are chiefly derived from my experience of the Bombay Presidency. Now, as you know, India is a vast peninsula populated by two hundred and eighty-five million souls. It is as large as Europe less Russia. In such a country, the customs and manners in different parts must be necessarily different. So, if in future you hear anything different from what I am going to say, I request you to bear in mind the above fact. As a general rule, my remarks will apply to the whole of India.

I shall divide the subject into three parts. In the first place, I shall say something, by way of preliminary, about the people who live upon the foods; secondly, I shall describe the foods; and thirdly, their uses, etc.

It is commonly believed that all the inhabitants of India are Vegetarians, but this is not true; and for that matter even all the Hindoos are not Vegetarians. But it is quite true to say that the great majority of the inhabitants of India are Vegetarians. Some of them are so because of their religion, while others are compelled to live on vegetable foods because they cannot afford to pay for meat. This will be quite clear to you when I tell you that there are millions in India who live upon one pice—i.e., one-third of a penny—a day, and even in a poverty-stricken country like India you cannot get eatable meat for that sum. These poor people have only one meal per day, and that consists of stale bread and salt, a heavily taxed article. But Indian Vegetarians

and meat-eaters are quite different from English Vegetarians and meat-eaters. Indian meat-eaters, unlike English meat-eaters, do not believe that they will die without meat. So far as my knowledge goes, they (the Indian meat-eaters) do not consider meat a necessary of life but a mere luxury. If they can get their *roti*, as bread is generally called there, they get on very well without their meat. But look at our English meat-eater; he thinks that he *must* have his meat. Bread simply helps him to eat meat, while the Indian meat-eater thinks that meat will help him to eat his bread.

I was talking the other day to an English lady on the ethics of diet, and she exclaimed, while I was telling her how even she could easily become a Vegetarian, "Say what you will, I must have my meat, I am so fond of it, and am positively sure I cannot live without it." "But, madam," I said, "suppose that you were *compelled* to live on a strictly vegetable diet, how would you manage then?" "Oh," she said, "don't talk of that. I know I could not be compelled to do so, and if I were I should feel very uncomfortable." Of course, no one can blame the lady for so saying. Society is in such a position for the present that it is impossible for any meat-eater to leave off eating meat without much difficulty.

In the same manner, an Indian Vegetarian is quite different from an English one. The former simply abstains from anything that involves the destroying of a life, or a would-be life, and he goes no further. Therefore he does not take eggs, because he thinks that in taking an egg he would kill a would-be life. (I am sorry to say I have been taking eggs for about a month and half.) But he does not hesitate to use milk and butter. He even uses these animal products, as they are called here, on fruit days, which occur every fortnight. On these days he is forbidden wheat, rice, etc., but he can use as much butter and milk as he likes; while, as we know, some of the Vegetarians here discard butter and milk, some do away with cooking, and some even try to live on fruits and nuts.

I will now pass to the description of our different foods. I must say that I shall not dwell upon the flesh foods at all, as these, even where they are used, do not form the staple article of food. India is pre-eminently an agricultural country, and a very large one. So its products are numerous and varied. Though the foundation of the British rule in India dates from the year 1746 A.D., and though India was known to the English much earlier than 1746, it is a pity that so little should be known of the foods of India in England. We have not to go very far to seek the cause. Almost all Englishmen who go to India keep up their own way of living. They not only insist on having the things they had in England, but will also have them cooked in the same way. It is not for me here to go into the why and wherefore of all these incidents. One would have thought that they would look into the habits of the people, if only out of curiosity, but they have done nothing of the kind, and hence we see the result of their stolid indifference in the loss to many Anglo-Indians of the finest opportunities of studying the food question. To return to the foods, there are many kinds of corn produced in India which are absolutely unknown here.

Wheat, however, is of course, of the greatest importance there as here. Then there are *bajara* (which is called millet by the Anglo-Indians), *joar*, rice, etc. These are what I should call bread foods, because they are chiefly used for bread-making. Wheat, of course, is greatly used, but it being comparatively dear, *bajara* and *joar* take its place among the poor classes. This is very much so in the southern and the northern provinces. Speaking of the southern provinces, in his Indian History, Sir W. W. Hunter says: "The food of the common people consists chiefly of small grains, such as *joar*, *bajara*, *ragi*." Of the north, he says: "The two last (i.e. *joar* and *bajara*) form the food of the masses, rice being only grown on irrigated lands and consumed by the rich." It is not at all unusual to find persons who have not tasted *joar*. *Joar* being

the diet of the poor, it is held in reverence, as it were. Instead of good-bye as the parting salute, the poor in India say '*joar*', which, when extended and translated, would, I think, mean, "May you never be without '*joar*'."[1] The rice, too, is used for bread-making, especially in Bengal. The Bengalees use rice more than wheat. In other parts, rice, as an article for bread-making, is rarely, if ever, used. *Chana*, or gram as it is called by the Anglo-Indians, is sometimes used for the same purpose, either in combination with or without wheat. It closely resembles peas in taste and shape. This brings me to the various kinds of pulses for soup-making, or *dahl*. Gram, peas, lentils, haricot beans, *tuar*, *mug*, *muth*, *adad*, are the chief pulses used for *dahl*. Of these, I think *tuar* heads the list in popularity. Both these kinds of foods are chiefly used when dried. Now I come to the green vegetables. It would be useless to give you names of all the vegetables. They are so numerous that I am sure there are many of them that I do not know. The soil of India is so rich that it can produce any vegetable you like. So we may safely say that with a proper knowledge of agriculture, the Indian soil may be made to produce any vegetable to be found on earth.

There now remains fruit and nuts. I am sorry to say that the proper value of fruits is not known in India. Though it is used in abundance, it is used rather as a luxury than anything else. It is used more for the sake of its palatable taste than of health. Therefore, we do not get such valuable fruits as oranges, apples, etc. in plenty; hence they are available only to the rich. But we get plenty of season fruits and dried fruits. Summer in India, as everywhere, is the best season for the former. Of these, the mango is the most important. It is the most delicious fruit I have yet tasted. Some have placed the pineapple at the top of the list; but a great majority of those who have tasted the mango vote

[1] Gandhiji appears to have confused between '*jowar*' (the foodgrain) and '*juhar*', a word of salutation in some Indian languages.

in its favour. It remains in season for three months, when it is very cheap, and consequently both the rich and the poor can enjoy it. I have heard that some even live on mangoes—of course, only while they are in season. But, unfortunately, the mango is a fruit that will not keep long in a good condition. It resembles the peach in taste, and is a stone-fruit. It is often as big as a small melon. That brings us to the melons, which are also plentiful in summer. They are far superior to what we get here. However, I must not inflict any more names of fruits on you; suffice it to say that India produces innumerable varieties of season fruits, which do not keep long. All these fruits are available to the poor; the pity is that they never make a meal of these fruits. Generally, we believe that fruit causes fever, diarrhoea, etc. In summer, when we always dread cholera, authorities prohibit—rightly, too, in many cases—the sale of melons and other such fruits. As for dried fruits, we get almost all the varieties that are to be had here. Of nuts we get some varieties which you do not get here; on the other hand, some that are to be had here are not seen in India. Nuts are never used as food in India; and so, properly speaking, they should not be included in the "Foods of India". Now, before I come to the last division of my subject, I should request you to bear in mind the following divisions of foods that I have made: first, corn, for bread-making, e.g., wheat, millet, etc.; second, pulse, for *dahl* or soup-making; third, green vegetables; fourth, fruits; and, fifth and last, nuts.

Of course, I am not going to give you recipes for cooking these different kinds of foods. That is beyond my power. I shall tell you the general way in which they are cooked for their proper uses. Diet cure or hygiene is a comparatively recent discovery in England. In India we have been practising this from time out of mind. Native physicians, no doubt, use drugs, too, but they depend more upon change of diet than upon the efficacy of the drugs they prescribe. They would ask you not to take salt in certain cases; in many,

they would ask you to abstain from acid foods, and so on, every food having its medical value. As for the corn for bread-making, it is the most important article of diet. For convenience, I have called the preparation made of flour bread, but cake would be a better name for it. I shall not relate the whole process of making it, but I may just say that we do not throw away the bran. These cakes are always fresh made, and generally eaten hot with clarified butter. They are to the Indians what meat is to the English. The quantity of food a person eats is measured according to the number of cakes he eats. Pulse and vegetables are left out of account. You may make a meal without pulse, without vegetables, but never without cakes. Different preparations, too, are made of the various kinds of corns, but they are merely cakes in disguise.

Pulse for soup-making, e.g., peas, lentils, etc., is prepared by simply boiling it in water. But an addition of innumerable condiments makes it a most delicious dish. The art of cooking has full play in these foods. I have known peas spiced with salt, pepper, turmeric, cloves, cinnamon, and such like. The proper use of pulse is to help you to eat the cakes. Medically, it is not supposed good to take too much of the pulses. A remark on rice here would not be out of place. As I have already said, rice is used for bread-making, especially in Bengal. Some of the doctors trace the diabetes from which the Bengalees very often suffer to this source. No one in India would call rice a nourishing food. It is the food of the rich, i.e., of people who do not want to work. Labouring men very rarely use rice. Physicians put their feverish patients on rice. I have suffered from fever (no doubt by breaking hygienic rules, as Dr. Allinson would say), and was put upon a diet of rice and *mug*-water. Recovery was marvellous.

Next come green vegetables. These are prepared in much the same way as pulses. Oil and butter play an important part in the preparation of vegetables. Often

gram flour is mixed with them. Simply boiled vegetables are never eaten. I never saw a boiled potato in India. Not unfrequently they make a combination of many vegetables. It is needless to say that India would far outbid France in cooking vegetables nicely. Their proper use is much the same as that of pulse. In importance they stand next to it. They are more or less a luxury, and are generally supposed to be a source of disease. Poor people have hardly one vegetable once or twice a week. They would have cakes and *dahl*. Some of the vegetables have an excellent medicinal value. There is one vegetable called *tandalja*. It very closely resembles spinach in taste. Physicians prescribe it to persons who have indulged in too much cayenne pepper and spoiled their eyesight thereby.

Then come fruits. They are used chiefly on "fruit days", but are rarely, if ever, used at the end of ordinary meals. People generally take them now and then. Mango-juice is very greatly used in the mango season. It is eaten with cakes or rice. We never cook or stew ripe fruits. We preserve unripe fruits, chiefly mangoes, while acid. Medicinally, fresh fruits, being generally acid, are supposed to have a tendency to give fever. Dried fruits are much used by children, and dried dates deserve some notice. We suppose them to be strength-giving, and therefore in winter, when we take concentrated foods, we prepare them with milk and various other things too numerous to be mentioned, and eat an ounce every day.

Lastly, nuts take the place of English sweets. Children eat a great quantity of sugared nuts. They are also largely used on "fruit days". We fry them in butter, and even stew them in milk. Almonds are supposed to be very good for the brain. I will just point out one of the various ways in which we use the cocoanut. It is first ground and then mixed with clarified butter and sugar. It tastes very nice. I hope some of you will try at home those cocoanut sweet balls as they are called. This, ladies and

gentlemen, is a sketch—a most imperfect sketch—of the foods of India. I hope you will be induced to learn more about them, and I am sure you will profit by doing so. In conclusion, I further hope the time will come when the great difference now existing between the food habits of meat-eating in England and grain-eating in India will disappear, and with it some other differences which, in some quarters, mar the unity of sympathy that ought to exist between the two countries. In the future, I hope we shall tend towards unity of custom, and also unity of hearts.

The Vegetarian Messenger, 1-6-1891

10. SPEECH TO THE BAND OF MERCY, LONDON

Upper Norwood. By previous arrangement . . . Mrs. McDouall . . . was to deliver a lecture to a meeting of the members of the Band of Mercy,[1] by the courtesy of Miss Seecombe, but she being ill, Mr. Gandhi (a Hindu from India) was requested and kindly consented to take the meeting. Mr. Gandhi spoke for about a quarter of an hour on Vegetarianism from a humanitarian standpoint, and insisted that the members of the Band of Mercy, in order to be logical, ought to be Vegetarians. He wound up with a quotation from Shakespeare.

The Vegetarian, 6-6-1891

11. FAREWELL DINNER AT THE HOLBORN

June 11, 1891

Although it was a sort of a farewell dinner, there was no sign of sorrow, because all felt that though Mr. Gandhi was going back to India, yet he was going to a still greater

[1] For the prevention of cruelty to animals.

work for Vegetarianism, and that upon the completion of his law career and his final success, congratulations to him should take the place of personal wailings. . . .

At the close of the function, Mr. Gandhi, in a very graceful though somewhat nervous speech, welcomed all present, spoke of the pleasure it gave him to see the habit of abstinence from flesh progressing in England, related the manner in which his connection with the London Vegetarian Society arose, and in so doing took occasion to speak in a touching way of what he owed to Mr. Oldfield.[1] . . .

He also pointed to the hope that a future congress of the Federal Union would be held in India.

The Vegetarian, 13-6-1891

12. *WHY HE WENT TO ENGLAND*

To enable Englishmen to appreciate the difficulties confronting Hindus intending to proceed to England for studies and to point out to such Hindus how the difficulties might be overcome, a representative of The Vegetarian *put Gandhiji a number of questions bearing on the subject and asked him to reply to them at length. The questions and answers are given below.*

I

Mr. Gandhi was first asked what was the reason which first induced him to think of coming over to England and adopting the legal profession.

In a word, ambition. I matriculated at the Bombay University, in the year 1887. Then I joined the Bhavnagar College, for unless you graduate at the Bombay

[1] Dr. Josiah Oldfield, Editor of *The Vegetarian*.

University you get no status in society. If you want any employment before that, you cannot secure unless, of course, you have a very good influence to back you up, a respectable post, giving a handsome salary. But I found that I would have to spend three years at the least before I could graduate. Moreover, I suffered from constant headaches and nose-bleeding, and this was supposed to be due to the hot climate. And, after all, I could not, even after graduating, expect any very great income. While I was incessantly brooding over these things, an old friend of my father saw and advised me to go to England and take the robe; he, as it were, fanned the fire that was burning within me. I thought to myself, "If I go to England not only shall I become a barrister (of whom I used to think a great deal), but I shall be able to see England, the land of philosophers and poets, the very centre of civilisation." This gentleman had great influence with my elders, and so he succeeded in persuading them to send me to England.

This is a very brief statement of my reasons for coming to England, but they by no means represent my present views.

Of course, your friends were all delighted at your ambitious purpose?

Well, not all. There are friends and friends. Those who were my real friends, and of about my age, were very glad to hear that I was to go to England. Some were friends, or rather, well-wishers, old in years. These sincerely believed that I was going to ruin myself, and that I would be a disgrace to my family by going to England. Others, however, set up their opposition simply from malice. They had seen some of the barristers who derived fabulous incomes, and they were afraid that I might do the same. Some, again, there were, who thought that I was too young (I am now about twenty-two), or that I should not be able to bear the climate. To cut the matter short, no two persons

supported or opposed my coming on the same grounds.

How did you set about carrying out your intention? Just tell me, if you please, what were your difficulties, and how you overcame them.

Even to try to tell you the story of my difficulties would fill up the whole of your valuable paper. It is a tale of misery and woe. The difficulties may well be likened to the heads of Ravan—the giant of the second[1] great Hindu epic *Ramayana*, whom Rama, the Hero, fought, and ultimately defeated—which were many, and which were no sooner chopped off than replaced. They may be divided chiefly under four heads, viz., money, consent of my elders, separation from relations, and caste restrictions.

First, then, as to money. Though my father was the prime minister of more than one native state, he never hoarded money. He spent all that he earned in charity and the education and marriages of his children, so we were practically left without much cash. He left some property, and that was all. When asked why he did not collect money and set it aside for his children, he used to say that his children represented his wealth, and if he hoarded much money he would spoil them. So, then, money was no small difficulty in my way. I tried for some State scholarship but failed. At one place, I was asked to prove my worth by graduating and then expect it. Experience teaches me that the gentleman who said so was right. Nothing daunted, I requested my eldest brother to devote all the money that was left to my education in England.

Here I cannot help digressing to explain the family system that prevails in India. There, unlike as in England, the children always, if male, and until marriage, if female, live with their parents. What they earn goes to the father, and so also what they lose is a loss to the father. Of

[1] The other great epic is the *Mahabharata*.

course, even the male children do separate under exceptional circumstances, e.g., in the case of a great quarrel. But these are the exceptions. In the legal language of Mayne: "Individual property is the rule in the West. Corporate property is the rule in the East." So, then, I have and had no property of my own. Everything was under the control of my brother, and we were all living together.

To return to the question of money. What little my father could leave for me was in the hands of my brother. It could only be set free subject to his consent. Moreover, that was not enough, so I proposed that the whole capital should be devoted to my education. I ask you if any brother would do so here. There are very few such brothers in India. He was told that I might prove an unworthy brother after imbibing the Western ideas, and that the only chance of regaining the money would be in my returning alive to India, which was very doubtful. But he turned a deaf ear to all these reasonable and well-meant warnings. There was one, and only one condition attached to the consent to my proposal, viz., that I should get the permission of my mother and my uncle. May many persons have such brothers as mine! I then set about the allotted task, which I can assure you was uphill enough. Fortunately, I was the pet of my mother. She had much faith in me, and so I succeeded in getting over her superstition, but how was I to make her nod consent to a three years' separation? However, by showing the exaggerated advantages of coming to England, I got her to accede, with much reluctance, to my request. Now for the uncle. He was on the point of going to Benares and such other holy places. After three days' incessant persuasion and arguments I could get the following answer from him:

"I am going on a pilgrimage. What you say may be right, but how could I willingly say 'yes' to your unholy proposal? The only thing I can say is, that if your

mother does not mind your going I have no right to interfere."

This was easily interpreted into 'yes'. Nor were these the only two whom I had to please. In India everyone, no matter how remotely connected, thinks that he has a right to poke his nose into another's affairs. But when I had exacted (for it was nothing else) acquiescence from the two, the pecuniary difficulties almost disappeared.

The difficulties under the second head are partially discussed above. You will, perhaps, be astonished to hear that I am married. (The marriage took place at the age of twelve.) Small blame then to my wife's parents if they thought that they had a right to interfere if only for the sake of their daughter. Who was to look after her? How was she to manage to spend the three years? Of course she was to be looked after by my brother. Poor brother! According to my ideas at that time, I should have taken little notice of their legitimate fears and growlings, had it not been that their displeasure would have been reflected on my mother and brother. It was no easy task to sit night after night with my father-in-law and to hear and successfully answer his objections. But then I was taught the old proverb, "Patience and perseverance overcome mountains", too well to give way.

When I had the money and the requisite permission, I said to myself, "How am I to persuade myself to separate from all that is dear and near to me?" In India we fight shy of separation. Even when I had to go for a few days my mother would weep. How, then, was I to witness, without being affected, the heart-rending scene? It is impossible for me to describe the tortures that my mind had to suffer. As the day of leave-taking drew near I nearly broke down. But I was wise enough not to say this, even to my closest friends. I knew that my health was failing. Sleeping, waking, drinking, eating, walking, running, reading, I was dreaming and thinking of England and what I would do

on that momentous day. At last the day came. On the one hand, my mother was hiding her eyes, full of tears, in her hands, but the sobbing was clearly heard. On the other, I was placed among a circle of some fifty friends. "If I wept they would think me too weak; perhaps they would not allow me to go to England," soliloquized I; therefore I did not weep, even though my heart was breaking. Last, but not least, came the leave-taking with my wife. It would be contrary to custom for me to see or talk to her in the presence of friends. So I had to see her in a separate room. She, of course, had begun sobbing long before. I went to her and stood like a dumb statue for a moment. I kissed her, and she said, "Don't go". What followed I need not describe. This done, my anxieties were not over. It was but the beginning of the end. The leave-taking was only half done, for I parted with the mother and the wife in Rajkot —where I was educated—but my brother and friends came to see me off as far as Bombay. The scene that took place there was no less affecting.

The collisions with my caste fellows in Bombay defy description, for Bombay is the place where they chiefly live. In Rajkot I did not meet with any such opposition worthy of the name. It was my misfortune to live in the heart of the city of Bombay, where they most abound, so I was hemmed in on all sides. I could not go out without being pointed and stared at by someone or other. At one time, while I was walking near the Town Hall, I was surrounded and hooted by them, and my poor brother had to look at the scene in silence. The culminating point was reached when a huge meeting of the caste fellows was summoned by the chief representatives. Every member of the caste was called upon to attend the meeting, under pain of forfeiting a fine of five annas. I may here mention that, before this step was determined upon, I was pestered with many deputations from them with no avail. At this great meeting, I was seated in the centre of the audience. The

Patels, as the representatives are called, remonstrated with me very strongly and reminded me of their connection with my father. It may be mentioned that all this was quite an unique experience to me. They literally dragged me out of seclusion, for I was not accustomed to such things. Moreover, my position became more precarious on account of an extreme shyness. Seeing that remonstrance fell flat on me, the head *Patel* addressed me (in effect) in the following words: "We were your father's friends, and therefore we feel for you; as heads of the caste you know our power. We are positively informed that you will have to eat flesh and drink wine in England; moreover, you have to cross the waters; all this you must know is against our caste rules. Therefore we command you to reconsider your decision, or else the heaviest punishment will be meted out to you. What have you to say to this?"

I replied in the following words: "I thank you for your warnings. I am sorry that I cannot alter my decision. What I have heard about England is quite different from what you say; one need not take meat and wine there. As for crossing the waters, if our brethren can go as far as Aden, why could not I go to England? I am deeply convinced that malice is at the root of all these objections."

"Very well, then," replied the worthy *Patel* in anger, "You are not the son of your father." Then, turning to the audience, he went on: "This boy has lost his sense, and we command everyone not to have anything to do with him. He who will support him in any way or go to see him off will be treated as an outcaste, and if the boy ever returns, let him know that he shall never be taken into the caste."

These words fell like a bombshell upon all. Even the chosen few who had supported me through thick and thin left me alone. I had a great mind to answer the childish taunt, but was prevented from so doing by my brother. Thus even though I got out of the ordeal safely, my posi-

tion became worse than ever. Even my brother began to vacillate, though only for a moment. He was reminded of the threat that the pecuniary support from him would cost him not only the money, but his membership of the caste. So although he did not say anything to me in person, he asked some of his friends to persuade me either to reconsider my decision or to defer its execution till the fury had subsided. There could be but one answer from me, and ever since that he never flinched, and, in fact, he has not been excommunicated; but the end had not come yet. The intrigues of the caste fellows were always at work. They almost seemed to have scored this time, for they could put off my going for a fortnight. They carried it out thuswise. We went to see a captain of a steamship company, who was requested to say that it would be unwise for me to leave during that time—August—because of the rough weather in the sea. My brother would consent to anything but this. Unfortunately, this was the first voyage that I had undertaken, so no one knew whether I was a good sailor or not, so I was helpless. Much against my will I had to put off the departure. I thought the whole structure would fall to the ground. My brother, having left a note to a friend, requesting him to give me the passage money when the time came, took leave. The parting scene was similar to the one described above. Now I was left alone in Bombay without money to buy the passage. Every hour that I had to wait seemed a year. In the meanwhile I heard that another Indian gentleman[1] was about to leave for England; this news was godsend to me. I thought I would be allowed to go now. I made use of the note, and was refused the money. I had to make preparations within twenty-four hours; I was in a dreadful flutter. Without money I felt as if I was a bird without wings. A friend whom I shall always thank came to the rescue and advanced the

[1] Mazmudar; *vide* p. 14, *supra*.

passage money. I bought the ticket, telegraphed to my brother, and sailed for England on the 4th September, 1888. Such were my chief difficulties, which spread over nearly five months. It was a time of terrible anxiety and torture. Now hopeful, and now despondent, I dragged along always trying my best, and then depending upon God to show me the cherished goal.

The Vegetarian, 13-6-1891

II

On your arrival in England, of course, you were face to face with the flesh-eating problem; how did you solve it?

I was overwhelmed with gratuitous advice. Well-meaning yet ignorant friends thrust their opinions into unwilling ears. The majority of them said I could not do without meat in the cold climate. I would catch consumption. Mr. Z went to England and caught it on account of his foolhardiness. Others said I might do without flesh but without wine I could not move. I would be numbed with cold. One went so far as to advise me to take eight bottles of whisky, for I should want them after leaving Aden. Another wanted me to smoke, for his friend was obliged to smoke in England. Even medical men, those who had been to England, said the same tale. But as I wanted to come at any price, I replied that I would try my best to avoid all these things, but if they were found to be absolutely necessary I did not know what I should do. I may here mention that my aversion to meat was not so strong then as it is now. I was even betrayed into taking meat about six or seven times at the period when I allowed my friends to think for me. But in the steamer my ideas began to change. I thought I should not take meat on any account. My mother before consenting to my departure exacted a promise from me not to take meat. So I was bound not to take it, if only for the sake of the promise. The fellow-

passengers in the steamer began to advise us (the friend who was with me and myself) to try it.

They said I would require it after leaving Aden. When this turned out untrue, I was to require it after crossing the Red Sea. And on this proving false, a fellow-passenger said, "The weather has not been severe, but in the Bay of Biscay you will have to choose between death, and meat and wine." That crisis too passed away safely. In London, too, I had to hear such remonstrances. For months I did not come across any Vegetarian. I passed many anxious days arguing with a friend about the sufficiency of the vegetable diet; but at that time having but little knowledge of arguments other than humanitarian in favour of Vegetarianism, I got the worst of it as the friend scouted the idea of humanity in such discussions. At last I sealed his tongue by telling him I would sooner die than break the promise to my mother. "Humph", said he, "childishness, rank superstition; but since, even after coming here, you are superstitious enough to believe in such nonsense, I cannot help you any more, I only wish you had not come to England."

He never afterwards pressed the point seriously, except perhaps once, though ever since that he took me for little more than a fool. In the meanwhile I remembered once to have passed by a vegetarian restaurant (it was the "Porridge Bowl"). I asked a gentleman to direct me there, but instead of reaching there I saw the "Central" restaurant, and went there and had some porridge for the first time. I did not at first enjoy it, but I liked the pie which I had for the second course. It was there that I first bought some vegetarian literature among which was a copy of *A Plea for Vegetarianism* by H. S. Salt, after reading which I adopted vegetarianism from principle.

Till then I considered flesh to be a superior diet from a scientific point of view. Moreover, it was there that I came to know the existence of the Vegetarian Society of Manches-

ter. But I did not take any active interest in it. I did, now and then, read *The Vegetarian Messenger* and that was all. My knowledge of *The Vegetarian* dates from a year and a half. It was at the International Vegetarian Congress that I may be said to have known the L.V.S. That the Congress was sitting I knew by the kind courtesy of Mr. Josiah Oldfield, who heard of me from a friend, and was good enough to ask me to attend it. In conclusion, I am bound to say that, during my nearly three years' stay in England, I have left many things undone, and have done many things which perhaps I might better have left undone, yet I carry one great consolation with me that I shall go back without having taken meat or wine, and that I know from personal experience that there are so many Vegetarians in England.

The Vegetarian, 20-6-1891

13. APPLICATION FOR ENROLMENT AS ADVOCATE

BOMBAY,
November 16, 1891

TO

THE PROTHONOTARY AND REGISTRAR
OF THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE
BOMBAY

SIR,

I am desirous of being admitted as an Advocate of the High Court. I was called to the Bar in England on the 10th June last. I have kept twelve terms in the Inner Temple and I intend to practise in the Bombay Presidency.

I produce the certificate of my being called to the Bar. As to the certificate of my character and abilities, I have not been able to obtain any certificate from a judge in England, for I was not aware of the rules in force in the Bombay High Court. I, however, produce a certificate from

Mr. W. D. Edwards, a practising Barrister in the Supreme Court of Judicature in England. He is the author of the Compendium of the Law of Property in Land, one of the books prescribed for the Bar Final Examination.

I beg to remain,
Sir,
your most obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma, Vol. I; from a photostat.

14. *ON MY WAY HOME AGAIN TO INDIA*

I

It was on the 12th June 1891, that I left for Bombay after three years' stay in England. A beautiful day it was: the sun shone brilliantly; no overcoat was needed to keep off the cold breezes.

It was at 11.45 that an express train carrying the passengers left the Liverpool Street Station for the docks.

I could not make myself believe that I was going to India until I stepped into the steamship *Oceana*, of the P. & O. Company. So much attached was I to London and its environments; for who would not be? London with its teaching institutions, public galleries, museums, theatres, vast commerce, public parks and Vegetarian restaurants, is a fit place for a student and a traveller, a trader and a "faddist"—as a Vegetarian would be called by his opponents. Thus, it was not without deep regret that I left dear London. At the same time I was glad because I was to see my friends and relations in India after such a long time.

Oceana is an Australian steamer, one of the largest boats of the company. She weighs 6,188 tons and her horse-power is 1,200. When we stepped into this vast floating island, we were treated to a good refreshing tea, to which

all (passengers and friends alike) did justice. I must not omit to say that the tea was served gratis. At this time, a stranger would have taken them all for passengers (and they were a goodly number), from the ease with which they were taking their tea; but, when the bell rang to inform the friends of the passengers that the ship was going to weigh anchor, the number appreciably melted away. There was much cheering and waving of handkerchiefs when the ship steamed off the harbour.

It may be well here to contrast the *Oceana* with the *Assam* into which the Bombay-bound passengers had to tranship at Aden. There were English waiters on the *Oceana*, always neat, clean and obliging. On the other hand, there were Portuguese waiters on board the *Assam*, who murdered the Queen's English, and who were always the reverse of clean, and also sulky and slow.

There was, moreover, a difference of quality in the food supplied in the two steamers. This was evident from the way in which the passengers were grumbling in the *Assam*. Nor was this all. The accommodation in the *Oceana* far outdid that in the *Assam;* this, however, the company could not help; they could not throw away the latter because the former was better.

How did the Vegetarians manage in the ship? This would be an apt question.

Well, there were only two Vegetarians, including myself. Both of us were prepared, in case we did not get anything better, to manage with boiled potatoes, cabbage and butter. But we had no reason to go to that extreme. The obliging steward gave us some vegetable curry, rice, stewed and fresh fruit from the first saloon, and last, but not least, brown bread; so we had all we wanted. Undoubtedly, they are very liberal in giving good and sufficient food to the passengers. Only, they go too far; so at least it seems to me.

It would not be amiss to describe what the second-saloon menus contained, and how many meals the passengers had.

To begin with, the first thing in the morning, an average passenger would have a cup or two of tea and a few biscuits. At 8.30 a.m. the breakfast bell would bring down the passengers to the dining room. They were punctual to the minute, at their meals, at any rate. The breakfast menu generally contained oatmeal porridge, some fish, chop, currie, jam, bread and butter, tea or coffee, etc., everything *ad libitum*.

I have often seen passengers take porridge, fish and curry, bread and butter, and wash down with two or three cups of tea.

Hardly had we time to digest the breakfast, when, bang, —it was the dinner bell at 1.30 p.m. The dinner was as good as breakfast: plenty of mutton and vegetables, rice and curry, pastry, and what not. Two days of the week, all the second-saloon passengers were served with fruit and nuts in addition to the ordinary dinner. But this, too, was not sufficient. The dinner fare was so easily digestible that we wanted a "refreshing" cup of tea and biscuits at 4 p.m. Well, but the evening breezes seemed so soon to take away all the effect of "that little" cup of tea that we were served a "high tea" at 6.30 p.m.: bread and butter, jam or marmalade, or both, salad, chops, tea, coffee, etc. The sea-air seemed to be so very salubrious that the passengers could not retire to bed before taking a few, a very few—only eight or ten, fifteen at the most—biscuits, a little cheese and some wine or beer. In the light of the above, are not the following lines too true:

> Your belly is your God, your stomach is your temple, your paunch is your altar, your cook is your priest. . . . It is in the cooking pots that your love is inflamed, it is in the kitchen that your faith grows fervid, it is in the flesh-dishes that all hope lies hid. . . . Who is held in so much esteem with you as the frequent giver of dinner, as the sumptuous entertainer, as the practised toaster of healths?

The second saloon was pretty full of passengers of all sorts. There were soldiers, clergymen, barbers, sailors, students, officials and, maybe, adventurers. There were

three or four ladies. We beguiled our time chiefly in eating and drinking. The rest of the time was either dozed away or passed in chatting, at times in discussing, in playing games etc. But after two or three days, the time between the meals seemed to hang heavy in spite of discussions and cards and scandals.

Some of us really warmed to the work and got up concerts, tugs-of-war, and running races for prizes. One evening was devoted to concerts and speeches.

Now, I thought it was time for me to poke my nose in. I requested the secretary of the committee, who managed those things, to give me a quarter of an hour for a short speech on Vegetarianism. The secretary obligingly nodded consent to my request.

Well, I made grand preparations. I thought out and then wrote out and re-wrote the speech that was to be delivered. I well knew that I had to meet a hostile audience, and that I should take care that my speech did not send my audience to sleep. The secretary had asked me to be humorous. I told him that I might be nervous, but humorous I could not be.

Now, what do you think became of the speech? The second concert never came off, and so the speech was never delivered, to my great mortification. I fancy it was because no one seemed to enjoy the first evening, for we had no pattis and gladstones in the second saloon.

However, I succeeded in discussing Vegetarianism with two or three passengers, who heard me calmly, and answered in effect, "We grant you the argument; but so long as we feel happy on our present diet (never mind about our being dyspeptic at times), we cannot give it a trial!"

One of them, seeing that my Vegetarian friend and I got nice fruits every day, did give the V. E. M. diet a trial, but the chop was too great a temptation for him.

Poor man!

The Vegetarian, 9-4-1892

II

Moreover, as an instance of affability between passengers and of politeness on the part of the first-saloon passengers, the second-saloon passengers were often invited to witness the theatricals and dances that they got up from time to time.

They had some very nice ladies and gentlemen in the first saloon. But it would not do to have all play and no quarrel, so some of the passengers thought fit to get drunk (beg your pardon, Mr. Editor, they got drunk almost every evening, but this particular evening they got drunk and disorderly). They, it seems, were discussing with one another over a glass of whisky, when some of them used improper language. Then followed a fight of words culminating in a fight of blows. The matter was reported to the captain. He reproved these pugilistic gentlemen, and ever since then we had no more rows.

Thus, dividing our time between eating and amusements, we moved onward.

After two days' voyage, the steamer passed by, but did not touch, Gibraltar. This caused much disappointment, mostly among smokers, who wanted to get tobacco, duty-free in Gibraltar, as some of us had entertained a hope the steamer would cast anchor.

The next place reached was Malta. It being a coaling station, the steamer stops there for about nine hours. Almost all the passengers went ashore.

Malta is a beautiful island without the London smoke. The construction of houses is different. We had a look round the Governor's palace. The armoury is well worth a visit. Napoleon's carriage is on view there. You see there some beautiful paintings too. The market is not bad. The fruit is cheap. The cathedral is magnificent.

We had a nice drive of about six miles to the orange garden. There you see some thousands of orange trees and some

ponds with gold fish. The drive was very cheap, only 2s. 6d.

What a wretched place Malta is for beggars! You cannot go along the road quietly without being pestered by a crowd of dirty-looking beggars. Some would offer to be your guides, others would offer to take you to shops where you could buy cigars or the famous Maltese sweet nougat.

From Malta we reached Brindisi. It is a good harbour and that is all. You cannot pass a single day in amusement. We had about nine hours or more at our disposal, but we could not utilize even four.

After Brindisi we reached Port Said. There we took final leave of Europe and the Mediterranean. Of course, there is nothing to be seen in Port Said, unless you want to see the dregs of society. It is full of rogues and rascals.[1]

From Port Said the steamer moves along very slowly, for we enter the Suez Canal of M. de Lesseps. It is a distance of eighty-seven miles. The steamer took nearly twenty-four hours to travel that distance. We were close to the land on both sides. The strip of water is so narrow that two steamers cannot go abreast except at certain places. At night the sight is charming. All the ships are required to light electric lights in front and these are very powerful. The scene when two pass one another is very pleasant. The electric light you get from the opposite ship is simply dazzling.

We passed the *Ganges*. We raised three cheers for her, which were heartily returned by the passengers on board the *Ganges*. The town Suez is at the other end of the canal. The steamer hardly stops there for half an hour.

Now we entered the Red Sea. It was a three days' voyage but it was most trying. It was unbearably hot. Not only was it impossible to remain inside the steamer, but it was too hot even on the deck. Here, for the first time, we felt that we were going to India to face the hot climate.

We had some breezes when we reached Aden. Here, we (the passengers for Bombay), had to tranship into the

[1] The reference, evidently, is to a section of the residents.

Assam. It was like leaving London for a miserable village. The *Assam* is hardly half as big as the *Oceana.*

Misfortunes never come single; with the *Assam* we had a stormy ocean, because it was the monsoon season. The Indian Ocean is generally calm, so during monsoon it is stormy with a vengeance. We had to pass five days more on the waters before we reached Bombay. The second night brought the real storm. Many were sick. If I ventured out on the deck I was splashed with water. There goes a crash; something is broken. In the cabin you cannot sleep quietly. The door is banging. Your bags begin to dance. You roll in your bed. You sometimes feel as if the ship is sinking. At the dinner table you are no more comfortable. The steamer rolls on your side. Your forks and spoons are in your lap, even the cruet stand and the soup plate; your napkin is dyed yellow and so on.

One morning I asked the steward if that was what he would call a real storm, and he said: "No, Sir, this is nothing," and, waving his arm, showed me how the steamer would roll in a real storm.

Thus tossed up and down, we reached Bombay on July 5th. It was raining very hard and so it was difficult going ashore. However, we reached the shore safely, and bade goodbye to the *Assam.*

What a human cargo was on the *Oceana*, and the *Assam!* Some were going to make fortunes in Australia in high hopes; some, having finished their studies in England, were going to India in order to earn a decent living. Some were called away by a sense of duty, some were going to meet their husbands in Australia or India, as the case may be, and some were adventurers who, being disappointed at home, were going to pursue their adventures, God knows where.

Were the hopes of all realized? That is the question. How hopeful, yet how often disappointed, is the human mind! We live in hopes.

The Vegetarian, 16-4-1892

15. LETTER TO PATWARI[1]

BOMBAY,
September 5, 1892

MY DEAR PATWARI,

I thank you for your kind letter and the advice you have given me.

As I told you in my last p.c., I have to postpone going abroad for practice. My brother is very much against it. He thinks that I need not despair of getting a decent livelihood in Kathyawar[2] and that without directly taking part in the *khutput*.[3] However this may be, since he is so hopeful and is entitled to every consideration from me, I shall follow his advice. Here, too, I have been promised some work. So I intend to be here for about two months at least.

I do not think my accepting a literary post will materially interfere with my legal studies. On the other hand, such a work will add to my knowledge that cannot but be indirectly useful in practice. Moreover, thereby I can work with a more concentrated mind free from worry, but where is the post? Not an easy thing to get one.

Of course, I asked for a loan on the strength of the promise you made me while at Rajkot. I entirely agree with you that your father should not know of it. Never mind about it now. I shall try somewhere else. I can easily understand that you cannot have a large surplus from one year's practice.

[1] The addressee is Ranchhodlal Patwari of Rajkot.

[2] Kathiawar, also known as Saurashtra.

[3] Machinations, in Gujarati.

My brother has been retained in Sachin as Secretary to the Nawab of Sachin. He has gone to Rajkot and will return in a few days.

I am glad to hear from Kashidas that he will settle in Dhandhuka.

The caste opposition is as great as ever. Everything depends upon one man who will try his best never to allow me to enter the caste. I am not so very sorry for myself as I am for the caste fellows who follow the authority of one man like sheep. They have been passing some meaningless resolutions and betraying their malice clearly in overdoing their part. Religion, of course, finds no place in their arguments. Is it not almost better not to have anything to do with such fellows than to fawn upon them and wheedle their fame so that I might be considered one of them? However, I have to move with the times.

I was very glad to hear of Vrajlalbhai becoming *Karbhari*[1] somewhere in Gujarat.

You write such a nice hand that I have been induced to imitate you though but imperfectly.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original in Gandhiji's own hand.

[1] Administrator, in Gujarati.

16. A QUESTION OF IDENTITY

PRETORIA,
September 16, 1893

TO

THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser

SIR,

My attention has been drawn to the reproduction of Mr. Pillay's letter[1] to *The Transvaal Advertiser* in your paper with comments thereon. I am that unfortunate Indian barrister-at-law who had arrived in Durban, and who is now in Pretoria; but I am not Mr. Pillay, nor am I a Bachelor of Arts.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 18-9-1893

17. THE INDIAN TRADER

PRETORIA,
September 19, 1893

TO

THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser

SIR,

I shall be very thankful to you if you would be good enough to find place for the following in your paper:

[1] Of complaint, that he (Pillay) was violently pushed off the footpaths.

Mr. Pillay, who recently wrote to *The Transvaal Advertiser*, has been taken to pieces for being "nasty" by some gentlemen here and by the papers there. I wonder if your leader about "the wily wretched Asiatic traders", "the real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community", "these parasites who live a semi-barbaric life" would not bear Mr. Pillay's letter out of the field in a hard word competition. However, tastes differ as to style, and I have no right to sit in judgment upon anyone's style of writing.

But why all this outpouring of wrath on the poor Asiatic traders? It is difficult to see how the Colony is in danger of literal ruination. The reasons, so far as I can gather from your leading article of the 15th instant, can be summed up in the following words: "One Asiatic has gone into insolvency, and paid 5d. in the £. This is a fair sample of an Asiatic trader. He has driven out the small European trader."

Now, granting that a majority of Asiatic traders do become insolvent, and pay very little to their creditors (which is not at all the case), is that a good reason for driving them out of the Colony or South Africa? Does it not rather show that there must be a defect in the Insolvency Law that they can thus ruin their creditors? If the law would give any latitude for such practices, people would take advantage of it. Do not the Europeans seek the protection of the Insolvency Court? I do not, of course, mean to defend the Indian traders by this *tu quoque* argument. I sincerely regret that the Indians should resort to such practices at all. It is a disgrace to their country, which one time had too great an idea of its honour to be associated with any dishonest dealing in trade. But it certainly seems to me that a case is not made out for expelling the Indian traders on the strength of the fact of their availing themselves of the law of bankruptcy. Not only can the law put a stop to the frequent occurrence of such cases, but the wholesale merchants, too, by being a little more careful, can

do so. And, by the way, does not the very fact that these traders do get credit from the European merchants show that they are not, after all, so bad as they are portrayed by you?

If the small European trader has been driven out, is it to be laid at their door? This shows, it would appear, a greater competency on the part of the Indian trader in commerce, and this very superior competency is to be a reason for his expulsion! I ask you, sir, is this fair? If one editor edited his paper more ably than his rival, and consequently, drives the latter out of the field, how would the former like to be told that he should give place to his crest-fallen rival because he (the successful one) was able? Should not the superior ability be a special reason for encouragement so that the rest may try to rise as high? Is it a sound policy to stifle healthy competition? Should not the European trader take a leaf out of the book of the Indian trader, if that be not below his dignity, and learn how to trade cheaply, how to live simply? "Do unto others as you would be done by."

But you say these wretched Asiatics live a semi-barbaric life. It would be highly interesting to learn your views of a semi-barbaric life. I have some notion of the life they live. If a room without a nice, rich carpet and ornamental hangings, a dinner table (perhaps unvarnished), without an expensive table-cloth, with no flowers to decorate it, with no wines spread, no pork or beef *ad lib*, be a semi-barbaric life; if a white comfortable dress, specially adapted to a warm climate, which, I am told, many Europeans envy them in the trying heat of summer, be a semi-barbaric life; if no beer, no tobacco, no ornamental walking stick, no golden watch chain, no luxuriously-fitted sitting room, be a semi-barbaric life; if, in short, what one commonly understands by a simple frugal life be a semi-barbaric life, then, indeed, the Indian traders must plead guilty to the charge, and the sooner the semi-barbarity is wiped out from the highest Colonial civilization, the better.

The elements that generally constitute a reason for expulsion of a people from civilized states are entirely absent in the case of these people. You will agree when I say that they are not a political danger to the Government, since they meddle very little, if at all, in politics. They are not notorious robbers. I believe there is not a single case of an Indian trader having suffered imprisonment, or even been charged with theft, robbery, or any of the heinous crimes. (I speak under correction.) Their teetotal habits make them exceptionally peaceful citizens.

But they spend nothing, says the leading article under discussion. Don't they? I suppose they live on air or sentiments. We know that Becky lived on nothing a year in *Vanity Fair*. And here a whole class seems to have been found out doing the same. It is to be presumed they have to pay nothing for shop-rents, taxes, butchers' bills, grocers' bills, clerks' salaries, &c. &c. One would, indeed, like to belong to such a blessed class of traders, especially in the present critical condition of the trade all the world over.

It seems, on the whole, that their simplicity, their total abstinence from intoxicants, their peaceful and, above all, their businesslike and frugal habits, which should serve as a recommendation, are really at the bottom of all this contempt and hatred of the poor Indian traders. And they are British subjects. Is this Christian-like, is this fair play, is this justice, is this civilization? I pause for a reply.

Thanking you in anticipation for inserting this,

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 23-9-1893

18. *WELCOME TO THE NEW GOVERNOR*

TOWN HALL,
DURBAN,
September 28, 1893

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY,
SIR WALTER HELY-HUTCHINSON, K.C.M.G., &C.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY—

We, the undersigned members of the Mahomedan and Indian community of the Colony of Natal, beg most respectfully to welcome Your Excellency on the occasion of Your Excellency's arrival here as the representative of Her Majesty the Queen, Empress of India.

We trust that Your Excellency will find the Colony and its associations congenial, and that the task of introducing a new form of government into Natal will be as free from difficulty as it will be pregnant with interest.

The special affairs of the Indian community in Natal will, owing to the extending Indian influence here, constantly occupy Your Excellency's attention; and we bespeak, with Your Excellency's permission, that consideration towards our community, which we are confident, Your Excellency, representing Her Most Gracious Majesty, will be pleased to grant to us.

We take leave to wish for Your Excellency and Lady Hely-Hutchinson all prosperity during your stay in this country. And we are Your Excellency's most obedient servants,

DADA ABDULLA
DAWOD MAHOMED
M. C. CAMROODEEN
AMOD JEEWA
AMOD TILLY
PARSEE RUSTOMJI
A. C. PILLAY

The Natal Mercury, 30-9-1893

19. *THE INDIAN VOTE*

PRETORIA,
September 29, 1893

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser

SIR,

I have to request your indulgence for inserting the following in your paper:

To make an exhaustive reply to the programme set forth by you for the would-be anti-Asiatic league in your issue of the 19th inst. is a herculean task, and it cannot be undertaken in the compass of a letter to a newspaper. I would, however, with your permission, take up only two items, viz., the fears about "the coolie vote swamping the European vote," and the supposed unfitness of the Indians to vote.

At the outset, I would appeal to your good sense, and the love of fair play which is supposed to be a characteristic of the British nation. No amount of facts or arguments would convince you or your readers of the justness of my remarks if you or they are resolved upon looking at one side only of the question. Cool judgment and a dispassionate and impartial enquiry are essential to a right view of the whole matter.

Does it not appear a far-fetched view that the Indian vote can ever swamp the European vote? A mere superficial observer can see that such a thing can never happen. A sufficient number of Indians can never command the property qualifications to be able to outdo the European vote.

They are divided into two classes—the traders and the labourers. The latter are by far in the majority, and have no votes as a rule. Poverty-stricken, they come to Natal on starvation wages. Can they ever dream of having enough property to qualify themselves for voting? And these are they who live here with any degree of permanence. Some only of the former class have the property qualifications; but then they do not live permanently in Natal, and many of those who can legally vote would never care to do so. The Indians as a class never, even in their own country, avail themselves of all their political rights. They are too much taken up with their spiritual well-being to think of taking an active part in politics. They have no very great political aspirations. They come not to be politicians, but to earn an honest bread, and it is a matter for regret if some do not earn it strictly honestly. So, then, it seems that all the fears about the Indian vote assuming portentous proportions are ill-grounded.

And even the few votes that the Indians command cannot in any way affect the Natal politics. All talk about an Indian party clamouring for Indian representation seems to be chimerical, for the selection would always be between two White men. Would it, then, matter much that there are some Indian votes? The most the few votes can do will be to secure them a perfectly white gentleman, who would, if he is faithful to his promise, do them good service in the Assembly. And fancy one or two such members making up an Indian party! Why, they, or rather he, would be a veritable John[1] carrying on in the wilderness without his electric, and perhaps I should say divine, power of converting. Even strong little parties representing diverse minor interests can effect very little in the Imperial Parliament. They can only heckle the First Lord with a few questions, and have the satisfaction of seeing their names

[1] Reference is to John the Baptist.

appear in the next morning's papers.

Then, you think that they (the Indians) are not civilized enough to be fit for voting; that they may not be any better than the natives; and that they are certainly not equal to the Europeans in the scale of civilization. Perhaps not. And all would depend upon the meaning of the word "civilization". It is impossible to enter into a full discussion of all the questions suggested by an enquiry into the matter. I may, however, be allowed to point out that they enjoy these privileges in India. The Queen's Proclamation of 1858—which is justly and rightly called the Magna Charta of the Indians—runs:

> We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and these obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. It is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge.

I can produce other similar extracts relating to the Indians. But I am afraid I have already trespassed too much upon your courtesy. I may add, however, that an Indian has been the acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Calcutta; an Indian is a judge of the High Court at Allahabad, whose co-religionists the Indian traders as a rule are; and an Indian is a member of the British Parliament. Moreover, the British Government in many respects follow in the footsteps of Akbar the Great, who ruled and lived in the 16th century. He was an Indian. The present land system is a copy of the policy of Todurmull, the great financier and an Indian, with but few modifications. If all this is the outcome, not of civilization, but of semi-barbarity, I have yet to learn what civilization means.

If, in the face of all the above facts, you can foment dissensions, and set the European section of the

community to work against the Indian section, you are great.

I am, &c.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 3-10-1893

20. *WORK FOR VEGETARIANISM*

Mr. M.K. Gandhi, in a private letter from Pretoria, writes:

"There is a very fine opportunity in South Africa for a Vegetarian Gardener. Cultivation is very much neglected though the soil is very fruitful.

"I am glad to say I have been able to induce my landlady, who is an Englishwoman, to become a Vegetarian, and bring up her children on a Vegetarian diet, but I am afraid she will slide down. Proper vegetables cannot be had here. Such as can be had are very dear. Fruit, too, is very dear; so is also milk. It therefore becomes very difficult to give her a sufficient variety. She would certainly leave it off if she finds it more expensive.

"I was very much interested in Mr. Hills's article on vital food.[1] I intend giving it another trial very soon. You will recollect that I did give it a trial when in Bombay, but not for a time long enough to warrant any opinion about it.

"Kindly remember me to all our friends."

The Vegetarian, 30-9-1893

[1] The theory of vital food was originally propagated by Mr. A. F. Hills, Chairman of the Vegetarian Society, at its first quarterly meeting on February 4 1889. He expounded, at some length, a somewhat remarkable theory of vitality, energy, rays of the sun etc., which were to be found in the following foods: fruit, grain, nuts and pulse, all raw. Hills: *The First Diet of Paradise*. For Gandhiji's 'Experiments in Vital Food', see the next article.

21. *AN EXPERIMENT IN VITAL FOOD*

Before describing the experiment, if it may be called one, I would mention that I gave the vital food a trial in Bombay for a week; that I left it off only because at the time I had to entertain many friends, and because there were some other social considerations; that the vital food agreed with me very well then; and that, had I been able to continue it, very likely it would have suited me.

I give the notes as I took them while I was conducting the experiment.

August 22nd, 1893. Began the vital food experiment. I have been cold for the last two days, with a slight cold in the ears too. Had two tablespoonfuls of wheat, one of peas, one of rice, two of sultanas, about twenty small nuts, two oranges, and a cup of cocoa for breakfast. The pulses and cereals were soaked overnight. I finished the meal in 45 minutes. Was very bright in the morning, depression came on in the evening, with a slight headache. For dinner had the usual things—bread, vegetables, etc.

August 23rd. Feeling hungry, had some peas last evening. Owing to that I did not sleep well, and woke up with a bad taste in the mouth in the morning. Had the same breakfast and dinner as yesterday. Though the day was very dull and it rained a little, I had no headache or cold. Had tea with Baker.[1] This did not agree at all. Felt pains in the stomach.

August 24th. In the morning woke up uneasy, with a heavy stomach. Had the same breakfast, except that the one spoonful of peas was reduced to half. The usual dinner. Did not feel well. Had feeling of indigestion the whole day.

August 25th. Felt a heaviness in the stomach when I got

[1] The reference is to a friend, A. W. Baker, attorney and preacher, who discussed Christianity with Gandhiji and introduced him to Christian friends in Pretoria.

up. During the day, too, did not feel well. Had no appetite for dinner. Still I had it. There were undercooked peas for dinner yesterday. That may have to do with the heaviness. Got headache in the latter part of the day. Took some quinine after dinner. The same breakfast as yesterday.

August 26th. Rose up with a heavy stomach. For breakfast I had half a tablespoonful of peas, half of rice, half of wheat, two and a half of sultanas, ten walnuts, and one orange. The mouth did not taste well throughout the day. Did not feel well either. Had the usual dinner. At 7 p.m. had an orange and a cup of cocoa. I feel hungry (8 p.m.), and yet no desire to eat. The vital food does not seem to agree well.

August 27th. In the morning got up very hungry, but did not feel well. For breakfast had one and a half tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of raisins, ten walnuts and an orange (mark, no peas and rice). Towards the latter part of the day felt better. The cause of yesterday's heaviness was perhaps peas and rice. At 1 p.m. had one teaspoonful of unsoaked wheat, one tablespoonful of raisins, and fourteen nuts (thus, the usual dinner was replaced by vital food). At Miss Harris's had tea (bread, butter, jam and cocoa). I enjoyed the tea very much and felt as if I was having bread and butter after a long fast. After tea felt very hungry and weak. Had, therefore, a cup of cocoa and an orange on returning home.

August 28th. In the morning the mouth did not taste well. Had one and a half tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of raisins, twenty nuts, one orange and a cup of cocoa; except that I felt weak and hungry I felt all right. The mouth, too, was all right.

August 29th. Woke up well in the morning. For breakfast had one and a half tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of sultanas, one orange and twenty nuts. For dinner had three tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of currants and twenty nuts and two oranges. In the evening had rice, vermicelli and potatoes

at Tyab's. Felt weak towards evening.

August 30th. For breakfast had two tablespoonfuls of wheat, two of raisins, twenty walnuts, and one orange. For dinner had the same things, with an addition of one more orange. Felt very weak. Could not take the usual walks without fatigue.

August 31st. When I got up in the morning the mouth was very sweet. Felt very weak. Had the same quantity of food both for breakfast and dinner. Had a cup of cocoa and an orange in the evening. Felt extremely weak throughout the day. I can take the walks with much difficulty. The teeth, too, are getting weaker, the mouth too sweet.

September 1st. Got up in the morning quite tired. Had the same breakfast as yesterday, the same dinner. Feel very weak; teeth are aching. The experiment must be left off. Had tea with Baker as it was his birthday. Felt better after the tea.

September 2nd. Woke up fresh in the morning (the effect of last evening's tea). Had the old food (porridge, bread, butter, jam and cocoa). Felt ever so much better.

Thus ended the vital food experiment.

Under more favourable circumstances it might not have failed. A boarding-house, where one cannot control everything, where it is not possible to make frequent changes in the diet, is hardly a place where food experiments can be conducted successfully. Again, it will have been noticed that the only fresh fruit that I could get was oranges. No other fruits were to be had in the Transvaal then.

It is a matter of great regret that, although the Transvaal soil is very fruitful, the fruit cultivation is very much neglected. Again, I could not get any milk, which is a very dear commodity here. People generally use condensed milk in South Africa. It must, therefore, be admitted that the experiment is entirely useless to prove the value of vital food. It were sheer audacity to venture any opinion

on the vital food after an eleven days' trial under adverse circumstances. To expect the stomach, used for twenty years and upwards to cooked food, to assimilate, at a stroke, uncooked food, is too much, and yet I think the experiment has its value. It should serve as a guide to others, who would embark upon such experiments, attracted to them by some of their charms, but have not the ability, or the means, or the circumstances, or the patience, or the knowledge to carry them to a successful issue. I confess I had none of the above qualifications. Having no patience to watch the results slowly, I violently changed my diet. From the very start, the breakfast consisted of the vital food, while four or five days had hardly passed when the dinner, too, consisted of vital food. My acquaintance with the vital food theory was very superficial indeed. A little pamphlet by Mr. Hills, and one or two articles that recently appeared from his pen in *The Vegetarian* were all I knew about it. Anyone, therefore, not possessing the necessary qualifications, is, I believe, doomed to failure, and will hurt both himself and the cause he is trying to investigate into and advance.

And after all, is it worth while for an ordinary Vegetarian to devote his attention to such pursuits — a Vegetarian who enjoys good health and is satisfied with his diet? Would it not be better to leave it to the adepts who devote their lives to such researches? These remarks apply especially to those Vegetarians who base their creed on the grand basis of humanitarianism — who are Vegetarians because they consider it wrong, nay, even sinful, to kill animals for their food. That the ordinary Vegetarianism is possible, is conducive to health, he who runs may see. What more, then, do we want? Vital food may have its grand possibilities in store; but it will surely not make our perishable bodies immortal. That any considerable majority of human beings would ever do away with cooking does not seem feasible. The vital food will not, cannot, as such, minister to the wants of the soul. And if the highest aim, indeed, the

only aim of this life, be to know the soul, then, it is humbly submitted, anything that takes away from our opportunities of knowing the soul, and, therefore, also playing with the vital food and other such experiments, is playing away, to that extent, the only desirable aim in life.

If we are to eat that we may live to the glory of Him, of whom we are, then, is it not sufficient that we eat nothing that, to the Nature, is repulsive, that requires the unnecessary spilling of the blood? No more, however, of this while I am yet on the threshold of my studies in that direction. I simply throw out these thoughts, which were passing through the mind while I was conducting the experiment, so that some dear brother or sister may find, perchance, an echo of their own in this.

The reasons which led me to try the vital food were its extreme simplicity. That I could dispense with cooking, that I could carry about my own food wherever I went, that I should not have to put up with any uncleanness of the landlady or those who supplied me with food, that, in travelling in such countries as South Africa, the vital food would be an ideal food, were charms too irresistible for me. But what a sacrifice of time and trouble to achieve what is after all a selfish end, which falls short of the highest! Life seems too short for these things.

The Vegetarian, 24-3-1894

22. *TO INDIANS IN ENGLAND*

Mr. M. K. Gandhi has sent round the following letter to the Indians in England and we reproduce it here to show what active work is still being done in our midst by Mr. Gandhi, in spite of the distance which separates him from us. And yet our opponents say that Vegetarian Indians have no persistence of purpose like the sons of "Honest John Bull"!—Ed., *Veg.*

[Pretoria]

To

The Editor
The Vegetarian

My Dear Brother,

If you are a Vegetarian, I think it is your duty to join the London Vegetarian Society, and to subscribe to *The Vegetarian* if you have not done so already.

It is your duty because—

(1) You will thereby encourage and aid the creed you profess.

(2) That will be an expression of the bond of sympathy that should exist between a Vegetarian and a Vegetarian in a land where there are so few of them.

(3) The Vegetarian movement will indirectly aid India politically also, inasmuch as the English Vegetarians will more readily sympathize with the Indian aspirations (that is my personal experience).

(4) Looking at the question even from a purely selfish point of view, you will thereby be able to have a large circle

of Vegetarian friends who ought to be more acceptable than others.

(5) Your knowledge of the Vegetarian literature will enable you to remain firm in your principles in a land where you are exposed to so many temptations, which have in very many cases proved irresistible, and you will, in case of illness, be able to get the aid of Vegetarian doctors and drugs, whom and which you will know very easily, having joined the Society and subscribed to its paper.

(6) That will help your fellow brothers in India a great deal, and be also a means of dispelling the doubt that still lingers in the minds of our parents as to the possibility of existence under a Vegetarian diet, and thus facilitate the way of other Indians to England a great deal.

(7) If there were a sufficient number of Indian subscribers, the Editor of *The Vegetarian* may be induced to devote a page or a column to India, which, you will admit, cannot but result in benefit to India.

Many more reasons can be given to show why you should join the Society and subscribe to *The Vegetarian*, but I hope these will be sufficient to induce you to view my proposal with favour.

Even if you are not a Vegetarian, you will find that many of the above reasons will apply to you also, and you can subscribe to *The Vegetarian*, and who knows but you may, in the end, consider it a privilege to join the rank of those who never depend for their existence on the blood of their fellow-creatures.

Of course, there is also the Manchester Vegetarian Society and its organ *The Vegetarian Messenger*. I have pleaded for the L. V. S. and its organ simply because it is so very handy, being in London, and because its organ is weekly.

I do trust that you will not excuse yourself from joining and subscribing on the score of economy, for the subscription is so small, and it is sure to more than repay your money.

Hoping you will not consider this an impertinence on my part,

Yours in brotherly love,

M. K. Gandhi

The Vegetarian, 28-4-1894

23. *VEGETARIANISM AND CHILDREN*

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, in a private letter, writes:

"Recently a grand convention of Keswick Christians was held in Wellington, under the presidency of Rev. Andrew Murray. I attended it in the company of some dear Christians; they have a boy six or seven years old. He came out with me for a walk one day during the time. I was simply talking to him about kindness to animals. During the talk we discussed Vegetarianism. Ever since that time, I am told, the boy has not taken meat. He did watch me, before the above conversation, taking only vegetables at the dinner table, and questioned me why I would not take meat. His parents, though not themselves Vegetarians, are believers in the virtue of Vegetarianism, and did not mind my talking to their boy about it.

"I write this to show how easily you can convince children of the grand truth, and induce them to avoid meat if their parents are not against the change. The boy and I are thick friends now. He seems to like me very much.

"Another boy, about 15, I was talking to, said he could not himself kill or see a fowl killed, but did not object to eating it."

The Vegetarian, 5-5-1894

24. QUESTIONS ON RELIGION

[Prior to *June, 1894*]

Gandhiji had great regard for Shri Rajchandra Ravjibhai Mehta, or Raychandbhai, a Jain thinker to whom he has devoted a chapter in The Story of My Experiments with Truth, *(Pt. II. ch. 1) He put Raychandbhai some questions of a religious character in a letter written from Pretoria prior to June, 1894. We have not been able to trace the original letter. The questions asked have, therefore, been extracted from Raychandbhai's reply published in* Shrimad Rajachandra, *a Gujarati book edited by his brother, Shri Mansukhlal R. Mehta; 1914, p. 292* et seqq. *The original indicates that a few more questions asked were omitted and hence their text is not available.*

What is the soul? Does it perform actions? Do past actions impede its progress or not?

What is God? Is he the creator of the universe?

What is *moksha* [salvation]?

Is it possible for a person to know for certain, while he is still living, whether or not he will attain *moksha*?

It is said that after his death, a man may, according to his actions, be reborn as an animal, a tree, or even a stone. Is that so?

What is *Arya Dharma*? Do all Indian religions originate from the *Vedas*?

Who composed the *Vedas*? Are they *anadi* [without origin]? If so, what does *anadi* mean?

Who is the author of the *Gita*? Is God its author? Is there any evidence that He is?

Does any merit accrue from the sacrifice of animals and other things?

If a claim is put forward that a particular religion is the best, may we not ask the claimant for proof?

Do you know anything about Christianity? If so, what do you think of it?

The Christians hold that the Bible is divinely inspired and that Christ was an incarnation of God, being His Son. Was He?

Were all the Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in Christ?

Can any one remember his past lives or have an idea of his future lives?

If yes, who can?

You have given the names of some who have attained *moksha.* What is the authority for this statement?

What makes you say that even Buddha did not attain *moksha*?

What will finally happen to this world?

Will the world be morally better off in the future?

Is there anything like a total destruction of the world?

Can an illiterate person attain *moksha* by *bhakti* [devotion] alone?

Rama and Krishna are described as incarnations of God. What does that mean? Were they God Himself or only a part of Him? Can we attain salvation through faith in them?

Who were Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva?

If a snake is about to bite me, should I allow myself to be bitten or should I kill it, supposing that that is the only way in which I can save myself?

25. *PETITION TO NATAL ASSEMBLY*[1]

DURBAN,
June 28, 1894

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE COLONY OF NATAL

THE PETITION OF THE INDIANS RESIDENT IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

1. That your Petitioners are British subjects, who have come from India and settled in the Colony.

2. Your Petitioners are many of them registered as electors duly qualified to vote at the election of Members to your Honourable Council and Assembly.

3. Your Petitioners have read with feelings of unfeigned regret and alarm the debate as reported in the newspapers on the second reading of the Franchise Law Amendment Bill.

4. Your Petitioners, with the greatest deference to your Honourable House, beg to dissent entirely from the views of the various speakers, and feel constrained to say that the real facts fail to support the reasons adduced in justification of the passing of the unfortunate measure.

5. The reasons, as reported in the newspapers, brought forward in support of the measure, your Petitioners understand, are :

(a) That the Indians have never exercised the franchise in the land they come from.

(b) That they are not fit for the exercise of the franchise.

[1] First it was addressed to both the Council and the Assembly. Then it was amended and addressed only to the Assembly, and a separate petition was addressed to the Council; *vide* p.103, *infra*.

6. Your Petitioners respectfully beg to press on the notice of the Honourable Members that all the facts and history point the other way.

7. The Indian nation has known, and has exercised, the power of election from times far prior to the time when the Anglo-Saxon races first became acquainted with the principles of representation.

8. In support of the above, your Petitioners beg to draw the attention of your Honourable Assembly to Sir Henry Sumner Maine's *Village Communities*, where he has most clearly pointed out that the Indian races have been familiar with representative institutions almost from time immemorial. That eminent lawyer and writer has shown that the Teutonic Mark was hardly so well organised or so *essentially representative* as an Indian village community until the precise technical Roman form was engrafted upon it.

9. Mr. Chisolm Anstey, in a speech delivered before the East Indian Association in London, said:

> We are apt to forget in this country, when we talk of preparing people in the East by education and all that sort of thing, for Municipal Government and Parliamentary Government, that the East is the parent of Municipalities. Local Self-Government, in the widest acceptation of the term, is as old as the East itself. No matter what may be the religion of the people who inhabit what we call the East, there is not a portion of the country from East to West, from North to South, which is not swarming with municipalities; and not only so, but, like to our municipalities of old, they are all bound together as in a species of network, so that you have, ready-made to your hand, the framework of the great system of representation.

Every caste in every village or town has its own rules or regulations, and *elects* representatives, and furnishes an exact prototype of the Saxon Witans, from which have sprung the present Parliamentary institutions.

10. The word *Panchayat* is a household word throughout the length and breadth of India, and it means, as the Honourable Members may be well aware, a Council of

Five elected by the class of the people to whom the five belong, for the purpose of managing and controlling the social affairs of the particular caste.

11. The State of Mysore has at the present moment a representative parliament, called the Mysore Assembly, on the exact model of the British Parliament.

12. The trading Indian community now residing in Durban have their *Panchayat* or Council of Five, and in case of matters of pressing importance their deliberations are controlled by the community at large, who can, according to the constitution of the body, overrule their decisions by a sufficient majority. Here is, your Memorialists submit, a proof of their capabilities as regards representation.

13. Indeed, so much has the Indians' ability to understand representative institutions been recognised by Her Majesty's Government that India enjoys municipal local self-government in the truest sense of the term.

14. There were, in 1891, 755 Municipalities and 892 Local Boards in India, with 20,000 Indian members. This would give some idea of the magnitude of the municipalities and the electorate.

15. If further proof be needed on this head, your Petitioners draw the Honourable Members' attention to the recently passed India Councils Bill, whereby the system of representation has been introduced even into the Legislative Councils of the various Presidencies of India.

16. Your Honourable Assembly will, your Petitioners trust, see, therefore, that the exercise of the franchise by them is no extension of a new privilege they have never before known or enjoyed, but, on the contrary, the disqualification to exercise it would be an unjust restriction which, under similar circumstances, would never be put on them in the land of their birth.

17. Hence, also, your Petitioners submit that the fear that they may, if they were allowed to exercise the privilege of franchise, "become propagandists of agitation and

instruments of sedition in that great country they come from," is, to say the least of it, without ground.

18. Your Petitioners deem it unnecessary to dwell upon the minor points and the needlessly harsh remarks made in the course of the debate on the second reading. They would, however, crave leave to give some extracts which bear on the subject under consideration. Your Petitioners would rather have been judged by their works than have sought to justify themselves by quoting what others have thought of their race; but, under the present circumstances, they have no other course left open to them, since, owing to want of free intercourse, there seems to prevail much misunderstanding about their capabilities.

19. Speaking at a meeting at the Assembly Rooms, Kennington, Mr. F. Pincott said:

> We have heard a great deal in this country about the ignorance of the Indian people and their unfitness for appreciating the great advantages of representative government. All that is really very foolish, because representative government has nothing to do with education. It has a great deal to do with common sense, and the people of India are gifted with as much common sense, as we have; we exercised the right of election and we had representative institutions many hundreds of years before we possessed any education whatever. Therefore, the educational test goes simply for naught. Those who know the history of our country know very well that two hundred years ago the grossest superstition and ignorance prevailed, and yet we had our representative institutions.

20. Sir George Birdwood, writing on the general character of the people of India, thus sums up:

> The people of India are in no intrinsic sense our inferiors, while in things measured by some of the false standards, false to ourselves, we pretend to believe in, they are our superiors.

21. Says Sir Thomas Munro, one of the Governors of Madras:

> I do not know what is meant by civilizing the people of India. In the theory and practice of good government they may be deficient; but if a good system of agriculture, if unrivalled manufacture . . . if the establishment of schools for reading and writing,

if the general practice of kindness and hospitality . . . are amongst the points that denote a civilized people, then they are not inferior in civilization to the people of Europe.

22. Professor Max Muller thus speaks of the much abused and more misunderstood Indian:

> If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant—I should point to India.

23. To appeal to the finer feelings, your Petitioners respectfully venture to point out that the Franchise Law Amendment Bill, if passed, would have a tendency to retard, instead of hastening, the process of unification the flower of the British and the Indian nations are earnestly striving for.

24. Your Petitioners have purposely let the English authorities speak on their behalf, without any comments to amplify the above extracts. It is yet possible to multiply such extracts, but your Petitioners confidently trust that the above will prove sufficient to convince your Honourable Assembly of the justice of their prayer, and they earnestly beseech your Honourable Assembly to reconsider your decision; or to appoint a Commission to enquire into the question as to whether the Indians resident in the Colony are fit to exercise the privilege of franchise, before proceeding further with the Bill.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc. etc.

Colonial Office Records, No. 179, Vol. 189: Votes and Proceedings of Parliament, Natal; 1894.

26. DEPUTATION TO NATAL PREMIER

DURBAN,
June 29, 1894

TO

SIR JOHN ROBINSON, K.C.M.G.
PREMIER AND COLONIAL SECRETARY
COLONY OF NATAL

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR,

We have to thank Your Honour very much for sparing some of Your Honour's valuable time to receive this deputation.

We beg to present this petition of the Indians residing in the Colony to Your Honour and beg you to give it Your Honour's earnest attention.

We would not trespass longer on Your Honour's courtesy than is absolutely necessary. We, however, regret that we have not at our disposal time enough to lay our case as thoroughly as possible before Your Honour.

Sir, we have been taunted with having woke up almost too late. It is only necessary to put before you the peculiar circumstances to convince Your Honour that we could not possibly have approached the Honourable Houses earlier. The two chief leading members of the community were away from the Colony on urgent business and were shut out from all communication with people in the Colony. Our very imperfect knowledge of the English language materially prevents us from keeping ourselves in touch with important matters as we should like to be.

With greatest respect to Your Honour, we beg to point out that both the Anglo-Saxon and the Indian races belong to the same stock. We read Your Honour's eloquent

speech at the time of the second reading of the Bill with rapt attention and took great pains to ascertain if any writer of authority gave countenance to the view expressed by Your Honour about the difference of the stocks from which both the races have sprung up. Max Muller, Morris, Greene and a host of other writers with one voice seem to show very clearly that both the races have sprung from the same Aryan stock, or rather the Indo-European as many call it. We have no wish whatever to thrust ourselves as members of a brother nation on a nation that would be unwilling to receive us as such, but we may be pardoned if we state the real facts, the alleged absence of which has been put forward as an argument to pronounce us as unfit for the exercise of the franchise.

Your Honour has, moreover, been reported to have said that it would be cruel to expect Indians to exercise the privilege of franchise. We humbly submit that our petition is a sufficient answer to this.

It has given us no small satisfaction to know that, however unjust Your Honour's speech may have appeared to us from our point of view, it breathed truest sentiments of justice, morality and, what is more, Christianity. So long as such a spirit is noticeable among the chosen of the land, we would never despair of right being done in every case.

It is therefore that we have ventured to approach Your Honour, fully believing that, in the light of the new facts disclosed by our humble petition, a display of the same sentiments will result in substantial justice being done to the Indians in the Colony.

We believe that the prayer of the petition is very modest. If the newspaper reports are trustworthy, Your Honour was pleased to acknowledge that there were some respectable Indians who were intelligent enough to exercise the precious privilege. That alone, in our humble opinion, is a sufficient reason for granting a Commission of enquiry

into the momentous question. We are willing to face, nay, we court such a Commission, and, will it be asking too much if we ask that the Indians should be allowed to exercise the privilege, if the impartial judgment of an impartial Commission pronounced the Indians fit for such an exercise? If we have understood the Bill rightly, the Indians would, in the event of its becoming law, rank lower than the lowest native. For, while the latter can educate himself into fitness for the power of election, the former never can. The Bill seems to be so sweeping that even the Indian Member of the British House of Commons, did he come here, would not be fit for becoming a voter.

Did we not know that other matters of equal importance seriously engage Your Honour's attention, we could go on showing the injurious consequences that would flow from the interpretation of the Bill, consequences perhaps never contemplated by its illustrious authors. If we were given a week's time we could put our case more exhaustively before the House of Assembly. We would then leave our cause in Your Honour's hands, imploring Your Honour with all the earnestness at our command to use Your Honour's powerful influence and to see that full justice is done to the Indians. For it is justice we want and that only.

We thank Your Honour for receiving this deputation and the patience and courtesy shown to us.

We beg to subscribe ourselves on behalf of the Indian community,

Your Honour's obedient servants,
(SD.) M. K. GANDHI
AND THREE OTHERS

No. 1 in Schedule of Correspondence published by order of the Legislative Assembly of Natal on 21st April, 1896.

Colonial Office Records No. 181, Vol. 41.

27. *QUESTIONS FOR LEGISLATORS*[1]

(A circular letter)

DURBAN,
July 1, 1894

TO

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SIR,

We, the undersigned, have sent copies of this letter under registered cover to the Honourable Members of both the Honourable the Legislative Council and the Honourable the Legislative Assembly, with a request to answer the questions asked in the enclosed. You will lay us under deep obligation, if you would be good enough to fill in the reply column of the enclosed memorandum, with any remarks that you may choose to make in the remarks column, and sign and send the same back to the first undersigned to the above address.

We beg to remain,
Sir,
M. K. GANDHI
AND FOUR OTHERS

QUESTIONS	REPLY *Yes or No*	REMARKS
1. Do you conscientiously say that the Franchise Law Amendment Bill is a strictly just measure without needing any modification or change?		

[1] The letter and the questionnaire are referred to in paragraph 8 of the petition to Lord Ripon, *vide p.* 119, *infra*.

QUESTIONS	REPLY *Yes or No*	REMARKS
2. Do you think it just that those Indians, who have not been able, from some cause or other, to have their names on the Voters' List, should ever be debarred from voting in the Parliamentary Elections, no matter how capable they may be or what interests they may have in the Colony?		
3. Do you really believe that no Indian British subject can ever acquire sufficient attainments for the purpose of becoming a full citizen of the Colony or of voting?		
4. Do you think it just that a man should not become a voter simply because he is of Asiatic extraction?		
5. Do you wish the indentured Indian who comes and settles in the Colony to remain in the state of semi-slavery and ignorance for ever, unless he chooses to go back to India for ever?		

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 189.

28. *DEPUTATION TO NATAL GOVERNOR*

DURBAN,
July 3, 1894

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SIR WALTER FRANCIS HELY-HUTCHINSON, K.C.M.G., GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN AND OVER THE COLONY OF NATAL, VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE SAME, AND SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE NATIVE POPULATION

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

At a meeting held on the 1st July, 1894, of leading Indians in Durban, we were requested to await Your Excellency's pleasure with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill, which was read a third time last evening in the Honourable the Legislative Assembly of the Colony of Natal.

The Bill as it stands disqualifies every Indian, whether a British subject or not, not already on the Voters' List, from becoming a voter.

We venture to say that, without any further qualification, the Bill is manifestly unjust, and would work very harshly at any rate upon some Indians.

Even in England, any British subject having the proper qualifications is entitled to vote, irrespective of caste, colour, or creed.

We would not deal at length with the question here lest we should trespass too much upon Your Excellency's courtesy, but would beg leave to present Your Excellency with a printed copy of the petition addressed to the Honourable Assembly and request Your Excellency to peruse it carefully.

To us our cause seems to be so just that it should not need any arguments to support it.

We trust that Your Excellency, representing Her Most

Gracious Majesty the Queen Empress, will not sanction a measure that would seem to lay down that an Indian British subject of Her Majesty can never become fit to exercise the franchise.

We hope to send a proper petition[1] to Your Excellency through the regular channels about the matter.

We thank Your Excellency very much for granting the deputation an interview in Durban and for Your Excellency's courtesy and patience.

We have, &c.,
(SD.) M. K. GANDHI
AND SIX OTHERS

Despatch No. 62 of 16th July 1894 from the Governor of Natal, Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, to Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies. Text of Enclosure 2.

29. PETITION TO NATAL COUNCIL

DURBAN,
July 4, 1894

The Hon. Mr. Campbell presented the following petition addressed to the President and Members of the Legislative Council:

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS RESIDENT IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Petitioners have been appointed by the Indian community resident in this Colony to address

[1] No further petition to the Governor of Natal was, in fact, sent. Evidently Gandhiji and his associates intended to do this, but events overtook them. Even this petition was rejected and the Bill was rushed through the House in all its stages, for submission to Lord Ripon, for the Queen's approval. A second petition had, therefore, to be submitted through Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson to Lord Ripon in London for his decision. *Vide* p. 116, *infra*.

this humble petition to your Honourable Council with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill which was read a third time on the 2nd July in the Hon. the Legislative Assembly. Your Petitioners, instead of setting forth herein their grievances at length, respectfully beg to refer your Hon. Council to the petition made by the Indians to the Hon. the Legislative Assembly regarding the Bill, a printed copy of which is annexed hereto for ready reference by the Hon. Members. The petition has been signed by nearly 500 Indians. This was done in the short space of one day. Had the Petitioners been given more time, from all the reports received from the various districts, they fully believe that at least 10,000 Indians would have signed it. Your Petitioners were in hopes that the Hon. the Legislative Assembly would see the justice of their prayer and grant it, but their hopes have been frustrated. Your Petitioners, therefore, have ventured to approach your Hon. Council with a view to induce the Hon. Members to give close attention to the petition hereinbefore referred to, and to use your correctional power in consonance with justice and equity. Some of your Petitioners undersigned had the honour to see some of the Hon. Members of the Lower House in connection with the petition aforesaid, and they all seemed to admit the justice of the prayer contained in the said petition, but the general feeling seemed to be that it was addressed too late. Your Petitioners, without going into the question, would respectfully submit that, assuming that it was so, the consequences of the Bill becoming law would be so grave, and the prayer is so just and modest, that being too late should not have weighed with the Hon. Members at all in considering the petition. Instances of Bills being thrown out or modified, under less imperative circumstances, by the Parliaments of civilized countries, after they have passed through the committee stage, would not be difficult to find. Your Petitioners need hardly men-

tion the instance of the House of Lords having thrown out the Irish Home Rule Bill, and the circumstances under which it was so treated. The Franchise Law Amendment Bill as it stands is, your Petitioners submit, so sweeping a measure, that no Indian who is not already on the Voters' List, no matter how capable he may be, can become a voter if the Bill becomes law. Your Petitioners trust that your Hon. Council will not endorse such a view, and will, therefore, send the Bill back again to the Legislative Assembly for its reconsideration.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

The Natal Advertiser, 5-7-1894

30. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

This letter appears to be the first of many that Gandhiji wrote to Dadabhai Naoroji. Dadabhai was acquainted with the problems of Indians in South Africa, having been approached by them as early as 1891 to place their petitions before the British Government. The complete letter is not available, and the following extracts from it are taken from R. P. Masani's Dadabhai Naoroji: The Grand Old Man of India, *pp. 468-9.*

DURBAN,
July 5, 1894

The first Parliament of Natal under Responsible Government has been pre-eminently an Indian Parliament. It has for the most part occupied itself with legislation affecting Indians, by no means favourably. The Governor, in opening the Legislative Council and Assembly, remarked that his Ministers would deal with the Franchise which was exercised by Indians in Natal, although they never exercised it in India. The reasons given for the sweeping

measure to disfranchise Indians were that they had never exercised the Franchise before, and that they were not fit for it.

The petition of the Indians seemed to prove a sufficient answer to this. Hence they have now turned round and given out the real object of the Bill, which is simply this: "We do not want the Indians any more here. We want the coolies, but they shall remain slaves here and go back to India as soon as they are free." I earnestly request your undivided attention to the cause and appeal to you to use your influence that always has been and is being used on behalf of the Indians, no matter where situated. The Indians look up to you as children to the father. Such is really the feeling here.

A word for myself and I have done. I am yet inexperienced and young and, therefore, quite liable to make mistakes. The responsibility undertaken is quite out of proportion to my ability. I may mention that I am doing this without any remuneration. So you will see that I have not taken the matter up, which is beyond my ability, in order to enrich myself at the expense of the Indians. I am the only available person who can handle the question. You will, therefore, oblige me very greatly if you will kindly direct and guide me and make necessary suggestions which shall be received as from a father to his child.

31. *SECOND PETITION TO NATAL COUNCIL*

DURBAN,
July 6, 1894

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF HONOURABLE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE COLONY OF NATAL

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS RESIDENT IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

(1) That your Petitioners have been appointed by the Indian community resident in this Colony to approach your Honourable Council with regard to the "Franchise Law Amendment Bill".

(2) Your Petitioners regret sincerely that their petition presented on 4th July, 1894, through the Honourable Mr. Campbell, being not in order, they have again to trespass on your Honourable Council's valuable time.

(3) Your Petitioners, as trusted and responsible members of the Indian community, beg to draw your Honourable Council's attention to the fact that the Bill under discussion has created a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction and disappointment among the Indian community. The more the provisions of the Bill become known among the Indians, the more your Petitioners hear the following expressions of opinion: "*Sarkar Mabap* is going to kill us, what shall we do?"

(4) With the greatest respect to your Honourable Council, your Petitioners submit that this is no mere idle expression of opinion, but a sincere one, which is worthy of the most serious consideration by the Honourable Council.

(5) It is not, your Petitioners venture respectfully to submit, a fact that the Indians do not know what voting means, as was attempted to be shown during the debate on the second reading of the Bill in your Honourable Council. They know very well what privilege a right of voting confers, and feel also the responsibility such a privilege carries with it. Your Petitioners only wish that your Honourable Council could personally witness the excitement and the anxiety with which every stage in the progress of the Bill is watched by the Indian community.

(6) Your Petitioners would not, for one moment, say that every member of the community has such a knowledge and, therefore such a feeling, but they may be permitted to say that it is general. Nor would your Petitioners hold that there are not Indians who should have no right to vote, but your Petitioners submit that that is no reason why the Indians should be excluded wholesale from the privilege.

(7) Your Petitioners venture to submit for your Honourable Council's consideration some of the anomalous results that would follow from the operation of the Bill:

(a) The Bill arbitrarily keeps on the Voters' List those who are already there, while it forever shuts the door against any new addition of a person who has not chosen to exercise the privilege hitherto.

(b) While some Indian fathers will be able to vote, their children never can, although the latter may surpass the former in every respect.

(c) It practically puts the free and indentured Indians in the same scale.

(d) Taking out for a moment the question of policy as the principle of the Bill, which seems to have developed but lately, the Bill seems to lay down that India has not at the present moment any Indian who is fit to exercise the privilege of franchise and that there is such a wide difference between a European and an Indian that contact

with the former, even for any length of time, does not fit him for the exercise of the precious privilege.

(8) Is it fair, your Petitioners humbly ask, that, while the father is a voter, he has to see his son, on whom he has lavished enormos usums of money to educate him so that he may become a public man, unable to possess a right that is now recognised as the birthright of all really educated persons born in civilized countries where representative institutions prevail?

(9) Your Petitioners would very much like to have dwelt upon the fear that the permission to allow the Asiatic to vote would ultimately result in a Government of Natives by coloured people, the Indians. But your Petitioners are afraid that this is not the occasion on which your Petitioners may lay their humble views before your Honourable Council on the question. They would rest content with saying that, in their opinion, such a contingency can never happen, and certainly the time is not ripe to provide against it, were it even possible in the remote future.

(10) Your Petitioners beg respectfully to submit that the Bill makes an invidious distinction between one class of British subjects and another. But it has been said that, if Indian British subjects are to be treated equally with the Europeans, the same treatment should be accorded to other British subjects, e.g., the Natives of the Colony. Without entering into odious comparisons, your Petitioners would venture to quote from the Royal Proclamation of 1858, which would show on what principles the British Indian subjects have been and should be treated:

> We hold ourselves bound to the Natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our services, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity, duly to discharge. In their prosperity will be

our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward.

(11) On the lines laid down in the above extract, and also the Charter of 1833, the Indians have been admitted to the most responsible posts in India, e.g., that of Chief Justice. And yet here, in a British Colony, an attempt is being made to deprive your Petitioners or their brethren or their children of the commonest right of an ordinary citizen.

(12) It has now been said that the Indians know the Municipal Self-Government but not the Political. Your Petitioners submit that this, too, is not now strictly true. But granting that it is strictly so, should that be any reason for barring the door to Political Franchise to Indians in a country where a Parliamentary Government prevails? Your Petitioners submit that the real and only test should be whether your Petitioners, and those on whose behalf they plead, are capable or not. A person coming from under Monararchical Government, e.g., Russian, may not have been able to show his capabilities to understand or appreciate Representative Government, and yet your Petitioners venture to believe your Honourable Council will not condemn such a one as unfit, if he is otherwise capable and fit.

(13) Before concluding, your Petitioners beg to draw your Honourable Council's attention to the following memorable words of Lord Macaulay: "Free and civilised as we are, it is to little purpose, if we grudge to any portion of the human race an equal portion of freedom and civilisation."

(14) Your Petitioners fervently trust that the above facts and arguments, if they prove nothing else, will prove to the satisfaction of your Honourable Council that a real necessity exists for a Commission of enquiry as to the fitness or the unfitness of the Indians to exercise the Franchise, as also to ascertain whether there is any ground for the fear that, in case of the Indians being allowed to exercise the privilege of Franchise as heretofore, their vote will swamp the European vote, and that they will have the reins of Government

in their hands, and also to report upon such other important questions. Your Petitioners pray, therefore, that your Honourable Council will send the Bill back for reconsideration by the Honourable the Legislative Assembly, with such just and equitable recommendations as your Honourable Council may think fit.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, &c. &c.

Petition presented by the Hon. Mr. Campbell to the Legislative Council of the Natal Parliament on 6th July, 1894, on behalf of Hajee Mahomed Hajee Dada and seven other Indians.

Colonial Office Records No. 181, Vol. 38.

32. *INDIANS AND THE FRANCHISE*

In a lengthy leading article entitled "Indian Village-Communities", The Natal Mercury, *on July 7, 1894, commented on the petition presented to the Natal Legislative Council by the Indian community in connection with the Franchise Law Amendment Bill, and argued that Parliamentary Government was very different from any form of representation known to the village communities of India. The Bill excluded Indians from the franchise on the ground that they had not exercised the franchise in their own country. The Indians pleaded that they had done so from ancient times in their village communities. But* The Natal Mercury *contested this view, and that of Sir Henry Sumner Maine, in his* Village-Communities in the East and West, *that Indians had been familiar with representative institutions almost from time immemorial.* The Natal Mercury *maintained that Indian village communities had nothing to do with political representation but only with the legal question of land tenure. It argued that village-community life was common to all primitive peoples and, if anything, proved the backwardness of a people, and quoted General Sir George Chesney's views in the* Nineteenth Century *to the effect that Indians were still in their political infancy. In reply, Gandhiji wrote as follows:*

DURBAN,
July 7, 1894

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

It was a treat to read your learned and able leader in today's issue. It was not expected that there would be nothing to be said against the franchise petition. That would be a wondrous—I was almost going to say, superhuman—thing that would not have its two sides, in these modern times. On the same principle, Sir George Chesney is not the only writer who would serve your purpose. Sir Henry Sumner Maine was also, after all, a mortal. It is, therefore, only natural that his theories and conclusions should be contested. There seems to be no escape for a mortal from "the pairs of opposites". I would, however, without for the present presenting the other aspect of the case, beg leave to revert to the matter on some future occasion.

The object of writing this letter is to "surprise" you. The State of Mysore, I am glad to say, has given the political franchise rights to its subjects. I take the following from a newspaper report:

> Under the system now expounded by the Dewan, all landholders paying a revenue of Rs. 100 or more, or *mohatarfa* of Rs. 13 and upwards, are entitled to vote for members of the Representative Assembly, and are eligible to become members themselves. Besides, all non-official graduates of any Indian University, ordinarily residing in the Taluk, have been given the privilege of electing, as well as of being elected. Thus property as well as intelligence will be represented in the Assembly. Further, it has also been specified that public associations, municipalities, and the local boards may also elect members. The total number of members fixed is 347, and these members are elected by nearly 4,000 electors.

Sir, I appeal to your good sense, and ask you, will you not better serve humanity by collecting and pointing out points of resemblances between the two peoples than

by holding out to the public gaze points of contrasts, often far-fetched or merely imaginary, that can but arouse the worst feelings of a man, while they can do nobody any real good? I hardly think it can be to your interest to sow the seeds of jealousy and animosity between the two nations. That, I doubt not, is in your power, as it is in anybody's, more or less. But a thing far higher and far nobler, too, lies within your reach—a thing that would bring you not only greatness, but goodness, and what is more, the gratitude of a nation that has not been crushed under 1200 years' tyranny and oppression, a fact by itself a miracle, — and that thing is to educate rightly the Colony about India and its peoples.

I am, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 11-7-1894

33. LETTER TO NATAL GOVERNOR

DURBAN,
July 10, 1894

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SIR WALTER FRANCIS HELY-HUTCHINSON, K.C.M.G., GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN AND OVER THE COLONY OF NATAL, VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE SAME, AND SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE NATIVE POPULATION

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH:

1. That Your Excellency's Petitioners, representing the Indian community residing in the Colony of Natal, beg hereby to approach Your Excellency with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill.

2. Your Excellency's Petitioners understand that Your

Excellency will send the Bill, above referred to, to the Home Government for Royal assent.

3. Such being the case, a petition[1] is being prepared for the Home Government regarding the Bill.

4. Your Petitioners will send the said petition to Your Excellency as soon as possible.

5. Your Petitioners respectfully request Your Excellency to postpone sending Your Excellency's Despatch to the Home Government with regard to the matter, till the petition hereinbefore mentioned is sent to Your Excellency to be forwarded to the Home Government.

And for this act of justice and mercy, Your Excellency's Petitioners shall for ever pray &c. &c.

(SD.) M. K. GANDHI
AND SEVEN OTHERS

Enclosure 6 in Despatch No.62 of 16th July, 1894, from the Governor of Natal, Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, to Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 189.

34. *LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI*

c/o MESSRS. DADA ABDOOLA & CO.,
DURBAN,
July 14, 1894

TO

THE HON. MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI, M.P.

SIR,

In continuation of my letter dated the 7th instant,[2] I have to inform you of the progress of the movement against the Franchise Law Amendment Bill as follows:

[1] *Vide* p. 116, *infra*.

[2] This letter is not available.

The Bill passed the 3rd reading in the Legislative Council on the 7th instant. The other petition to the Council was accepted. One Hon. Member moved the postponement of the 3rd reading till the petition was considered by the House. The motion was rejected.

The Governor has given his assent to the Bill subject to its being disallowed by Her Majesty. The Bill has a proviso in it that it shall not become law until, by a proclamation or otherwise, the Governor signifies that it is not Her Majesty's wish to disallow the Bill.

I send you herewith a copy of the petition[1] to the Home Government that will be sent to the Governor here probably on the 17th instant. It will be signed by nearly 10,000 Indians. Nearly 5,000 signatures have already been received.

I regret to say that I am unable to send you a copy of the petition to the Council.[2] I however beg to send a newspaper cutting which gives a fairly good report.

I do not think there remains anything more to be added. The situation is so critical that if the Franchise Bill becomes law, the position of the Indian 10 years hence will be simply intolerable in the Colony.

I remain,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's own hand.

[1] *Vide* p. 116, *infra*.
[2] *Vide* p. 107, *supra*.

35. PETITION TO LORD RIPON

Gandhiji says in the Autobiography *that he took great pains over this petition relating to franchise for Indians and obtained over 10,000 signatures for it in the course of a fortnight. The Prime Minister of Natal, in his forwarding letter to the Governor, set out reasons for recommending that the appeal should be rejected.*

[DURBAN,
July 17, 1894][1]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE MARQUIS OF RIPON, HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS NOW RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

MOST HUMBLY SHEWETH:

1. That Your Lordship's Petitioners are Indian British subjects, residing in the various districts of the Colony of Natal.

2. Some of Your Lordship's Petitioners are traders, who have come to the Colony and settled therein. Some again are those who, in the first instance, came from India under indenture, and have now, for some time (even thirty years), become free. Some are Indians under indenture, and some are born and educated in the Colony, and engaged in various pursuits of life as attorneys' clerks, compounders, compositors, photographers, schoolmasters, etc. Again, some of Your Lordship's Petitioners have considerable landed property in the Colony, and are duly qualified to vote at the election of Members for the Honourable the Legislative Assembly. And a few have got the sufficient property

[1] Based on the reference to the petition on p. 115, *supra*.

qualifications, but have not been able to get their names on the Voters' Roll from some cause or other.

3. Your Lordship's Petitioners hereby approach Your Lordship with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill, which was introduced last session by the Honourable Sir John Robinson, the Prime Minister of the Colony, and which has passed the third reading in the Honourable Legislative Council, and received the assent of His Excellency the Governor, subject to its being disallowed by Her Majesty.

4. The Bill above referred to has for its object the disqualification of all the persons of Asiatic extraction, who have settled in the Colony, to vote at the Parliamentary elections. It, however, excepts those who are already rightly placed on the Voters' Lists.

5. Your Lordship's Petitioners crave leave to give a short history of the movement carried on to obtain redress through the constituted authorities in the Colony.

6. It was when the Franchise Law Amendment Bill had passed the second reading that Your Lordship's Petitioners first approached the Honourable the Legislative Assembly. When Your Lordship's Petitioners became aware that two days after the second reading, the Bill had passed the committee stage, and a day after, it would pass the third reading, it was impossible to present a petition to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly unless the third reading was postponed. Your Lordship's Petitioners, therefore, sent a telegraphic petition to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly, requesting that a postponement should be granted. The postponement was very graciously granted for one day. In that one day, about 500 Indians signed a petition which was the next day presented to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly. In Maritzburg, a deputation waited upon some Honourable Members of the Honourable House, including the Premier and the Attorney-General. The deputation was very courteously received and given a patient hearing. Most of the Honourable Members waited

upon more or less admitted the justice of the prayer contained in the said petition, though all said that it was presented too late. The Honourable Prime Minister, in order that it might be studied, asked leave to postpone the third reading for four days. It might be mentioned also that telegraphic petitions were sent to the Honourable the Legislative Council from Verulam, Richmond Road and other places, endorsing the said petition. But they were ruled out of order on the ground they were not presented through a Member of the House. Your Lordship's Petitioners have not annexed hereto the various petitions referred to, as these will no doubt be sent to Your Lordship by the Government.

7. Four days after the presentation of the petition, i.e., on the 2nd July, 1894, Monday, the Bill was, contrary to your Petitioners' expectations and much to their regret, read a third time.

8. On the Tuesday following, Your Lordship's Petitioners thereupon sent a petition to the Honourable the Legislative Council, which was presented through the Honourable Mr. Campbell, but the petition was ruled not in order, because it contained references to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly, and the Bill was read a second time. Your Lordship's Petitioners, as soon as they knew this, lost no time in addressing another petition to the Honourable Council, which was sent on the Thursday following, and was presented on Friday through the same Honourable Member. In the meanwhile, i.e., within one day after the second reading, the Bill had passed the committee stage. The Honourable Mr. Campbell moved the postponement of the third reading of the Bill, in order that the petition last mentioned might be considered. The motion, however, was not carried on the ground that the petition was presented *too late*. The Bill had been hardly four days before the Honourable Council, as Your Lordship will notice. Your Lordship's Petitioners may also mention that a deputation was appointed by the leading members of the Indian

community to wait upon His Excellency the Honourable Sir Walter F. Hely-Hutchinson, who very kindly and courteously received the deputation. In order to know the individual opinions of the Honourable Members of the two Houses, a Committee of Indians sent a printed circular to the Honourable Members requesting them to answer certain questions. Your Petitioners append hereto the Circular and the Memorandum[1] containing the questions. So far, only one Honourable Member has been good enough to send a reply, but he, too, has not answered the questions.

9. Before proceeding to criticise the Franchise Bill, Your Lordship's Petitioners would beg to dispose of one point that has been used against Your Lordship's Petitioners, namely, that they approached the Honourable Assembly too late. As to this, your Petitioners would simply state that they were not technically too late, and that the issues involved were, and are, so important, and the Bill so vitally affected and affects Her Majesty's Indian subjects that the Government, or the Honourable the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly might well have reconsidered their decision and thoroughly investigated Your Lordship's Petitioners' case before allowing the Bill to pass the third reading.

10. During the debate it was stated, as also it is stated in the preamble of the Bill, that the Asiatic communities have never exercised the privilege of Franchise, and it was stated further, during the debate, that the Asiatics were not fit to exercise the Franchise. These were, then, the two chief reasons alleged for the exclusion of the Indians from the privilege of the Franchise. Your Petitioners venture to believe that the petition to the Honourable Assembly sufficiently disposes of the two contentions above-mentioned.

11. Although it was not openly acknowledged that the

[1] See "Questions for Legislators", July 1, 1894, pp. 100-1, *supra*.

two objections to the Asiatics exercising the Franchise privilege had fallen through, it seemed to be tacitly recognised that such was the case, for it was more openly declared in the third reading of the Bill in the Honourable Assembly, that the exclusion was to be justified, not on moral and equitable grounds, as was contended at the time of the second reading, but on purely political grounds. It was said that, if the Indians were allowed to vote, their vote would swamp the European vote, and that there would be a Government by the Asiatics instead of by the Europeans.

12. Your Lordship's Petitioners venture [to submit], with the greatest deference to both the Honourable Houses, that the above fears are entirely groundless. Even at the present moment there are very few Indian electors as compared with European electors. The Indians who come under indenture cannot possibly have the sufficient property qualifications to be qualified for voting during their term of indenture, and for many more years afterwards. It is, moreover, a notorious fact that those who come on their own means do not remain for good in the Colony, but after a certain number of years, return home and are replaced by other Indians. Thus, so far as the trading community is concerned, the number of votes would, as a rule, always remain unchanged. Another fact, too, cannot be lost sight of, viz., that the Indians do not take such an active interest in the political affairs of the Colony as the European section of the community. It seems that there are 45,000 Europeans, and the same number of Indians; that fact alone shows how material is the difference between the European and the Indian vote. And Your Lordship's Petitioners submit that it is well nigh impossible that any Indian can hope to enter into the Natal Parliament for generations to come. This, Your Lordship's Petitioners humbly submit, hardly needs any proof to support it.

13. And if Your Lordship's Petitioners are not unfit to exercise the privilege, should it matter that they have some

voice in the government of the Colony, and more especially the government of themselves?

14. Your Lordship's Petitioners venture to submit that the Bill is admittedly retrograde in character and that it is manifestly unjust.

15. The very fact that those who are rightly on the Voters' List are to be allowed to remain there, at once, in your Petitioners' humble opinion, recognises the ability of your Petitioners to understand the privilege and the responsibility attached to the exercise of the Franchise. Your Lordship's Petitioners cannot believe that they are allowed to remain on the List even though they are not fit to vote, as was attempted to be shown in the course of the debate.

16. It has also been said that Clause II of the Bill fully meets the ends of justice. Your Petitioners submit that it does not. On the contrary, it injures the feelings of both those who are on the List and those who are not.

17. It is little comfort to those who are already on the List to know that they may vote, while their children never can, no matter how well educated and well qualified they may be. Indian parents who settle in the Colony will have, if the Bill becomes law, the best stimulus to give higher education to their children taken away from them. They would hardly like to see their sons pariahs of society, without a status or without any ambition in life. Even wealth becomes useless if it gives a man no place in society. The very aim with which men collect wealth is thus nipped in the bud.

18. And the Second Clause vexes those who have been in the Colony already to know that, while their brethren, who are in no way superior to them, by a chance retain the right to vote, they themselves cannot vote simply because, perhaps, owing to circumstances entirely beyond their control, they have not been able to get their names on the Voters' List. The Bill thus makes between Indian British subjects of the same class an invidious distinction based on accidental circumstances.

19. It has also been hinted that the justice done by the Second Clause is not gratefully acknowledged by your Petitioners. But, with the greatest respect to the just intentions of the Government in introducing the Second Clause, Your Lordship's Petitioners have failed to see the justice thereof. This was even admitted by some Honourable Members themselves, who did not care whether the Second Clause was "in" or "out", as those votes were bound to drop off before long. This seems to be self-evident.

20. Your Lordship's Petitioners have noticed with shame and sorrow the zealous attempt made to compare your Petitioners with the natives of South Africa. Very often it was said that the natives had a better claim to vote, if the Indians had any, simply because they were British subjects. Your Lordship's Petitioners would not enter into a discussion of the comparison, but would draw your Lordship's attention to the Royal Proclamation of 1858, as also to Your Lordship's own personal experience of the Indian nation. Your Petitioners need hardly point out the marked difference that exists between the Governments of Indian British subjects and Native British subjects.

21. There are, at the present moment, hundreds of educated Indians, signatures of some of whom appear in the petition, who would not be able to vote at the Parliamentary elections if the Bill became law. Your Petitioners fully trust that Your Lordship will never advise Her Most Gracious Majesty to sanction a Bill that would cause such a grave injustice to any section of British subjects.

22. In the *Natal Government Gazette* of March 27, 1894, Your Lordship's Petitioners find, from the Indian Immigrants School Board Report for 1893, that there were 26 schools and 2,589 scholars studying in the schools that year. Your Petitioners respectfully submit that these boys, who are many of them born in the Colony, are entirely brought up after the European style. They, in later life, come in contact chiefly with the European community, and therefore, in

every respect, become as fit for the Franchise privilege as any European, unless there is something radically wanting in them to compete with the Europeans in educational ability. That they are not incompetent, Your Lordship's Petitioners submit, has been proved beyond doubt by the best authorities on such subjects. The results, alike in India as in England, of the competition between English and Indian students, furnish ample proof of the Indian's ability to successfully compete with the European. Your Lordship's Petitioners purposely refrain from quoting extracts from the evidence given before the Parliamentary committees, or from great writers on the above head, because that would almost look like carrying coals to Newcastle. If, then, your Petitioners humbly venture to claim a vote for these boys when they come of age, is it not merely asking what any person in a civilized country would consider as his birthright and would very properly resent any interference with? Your Petitioners confidently trust that Your Lordship will not let these boys be subjected to the indignity of being deprived of the commonest right of a citizen in a country governed by Parliamentary institutions.

23. Your Lordship's Petitioners here have to note with gratitude that the Hon. Mr. Campbell and the Hon. Mr. Don saw and remarked about the injustice that would be done to those Indians who come to the Colony on their own means, but they, too, seem to think, with the other Honourable Members, that those who come under indenture should *never* get the vote. Your Lordship's Petitioners, while they admit (although they cannot help remarking that poverty should be no crime if a man is otherwise fit) that the indentured Indians, while under indenture, may not have the right to vote, they respectfully submit that even these men should not *for ever* be deprived from voting if they acquire the sufficient qualifications in later life. Such men who come here are, as a rule, able-bodied and young; they come under European influences, and while they are under indenture,

and especially after they become free, rapidly begin to assimilate themselves to the European civilization, and develop into full Colonists. They are admitted to be very useful, in fact, invaluable people, who live quietly and peacefully. It may be remarked that most of the educated Indian youths, who are now in the Civil Service as clerks and interpreters, or outside it as schoolmasters, teachers or attorneys' clerks, have come to the Colony under indenture. It is submitted that it would be cruel *not* to allow them, or their children, to vote and to have a voice in their own government at any rate. Your Petitioners submit that the fact alone that a person is of Asiatic extraction, or has once been under indenture, should not be a bar to political freedom and political privileges, if he is or becomes otherwise duly fit and qualified.

24. Your Lordship's Petitioners beg to draw Your Lordship's attention to the anomaly that the Bill would rank the Indian lower than the rawest Native. For while the rawest Native can become emancipated if he acquires the proper qualifications, the Indian British subject who is now entitled to vote would be so disenfranchised that he can never again become emancipated, no matter how capable he becomes in after life, or how capable he is at the time of disenfranchisement.

25. The measure is so sweeping and so drastic that, Your Lordship's Petitioners humbly submit, it is an insult to the whole Indian nation, inasmuch as, if the most distinguished son of India came to Natal and settled, he would not be able to have the right to vote because, presumably, according to the Colonial view, he is unfit for the privilege. This hardship was recognised by the Honourable Members in both the Houses, and the Honourable the Treasurer went so far as to say that special cases of hardship may in future be dealt with by the Parliament.

26. To illustrate the above argument more fully, your Petitioners would draw Your Lordship's attention to the

papers and *Government Gazettes* in connection with the Indian vote question that was raised and discussed in the late Honourable the Legislative Council of Natal. From a Blue book containing the correspondence relating to the affairs of Natal (C-3796, 1883), your Petitioners take the following from Mr. Saunders's letter to the Colonial Office (page 3):

> The mere definition that these signatures must be in full, and in the elector's own handwriting, and written in European characters, would go a long way to check the extreme risk of the Asiatic mind swamping the English.

Thus Mr. Saunders, zealous advocate as he was of anti-Asiatic policy, could not go further than this. In the same letter, the Honourable gentleman says further:

> The better-class Indians feel and see there is a difference between the raw coolie and themselves.

Therefore, it seems that the Government of the day was quite willing to distinguish between Indians and Indians. Now, unfortunately, under freer institutions, all Indians, indentured, and freed, and free, are attempted to be put in the same scale. Your Petitioners cannot help respectfully expressing that Mr. Saunders's measure was comparatively very mild compared to the Bill under discussion. But that measure, too, did not receive support from Her Majesty's benign Government; much less, therefore, your Petitioners submit, should the Franchise Law Amendment Bill. In the same book above referred to, the then Protector of Immigrants, Mr. Graves, says, at page 7:

> I am of the opinion that only those Indians who have abandoned all claim for themselves and their families for a free return passage to India are *justly* entitled to the Franchise.

He very justly pointed out, also, that the signature test suggested by Mr. Saunders was not applied in practice to the European electors. At the same page, the then Attorney-General says in his report:

> It will be noticed that the measure drafted by me contains certain clauses which have been adopted from the recommendations of the

> Select Committee, providing for the carrying out of the alternative plan mentioned in Mr. Saunders's letter, while *the proposal for the specific disqualification of aliens has not been considered advisable of adoption.*

Your Lordship's Memorialists would beg to draw your Lordship's attention to the same learned gentleman's report at page 91 of the same Blue book. The temptation to quote again from another report by the same learned Attorney-General is irresistible. At page 14 (*idem*) he says:

> As regards the proposal to exclude from the exercise of the Franchise all persons of every nationality or race which is not in every respect under the common law of the Colony, this is a provision evidently aimed at the electoral rights at present enjoyed by the Indian and Creole population of this Colony. As I have already stated in my report on Bill No. 12, I cannot *recognise the justice or expediency of such a measure.*

27. Thus it happens that, under a freer constitution in the Colony, that should include Your Lordship's Petitioners also, the First Responsible Ministry, your Petitioners regret to say, have attempted to make your Petitioners less free, to disenfranchise them wholesale. In the face of the fact that, under the old *regime*, a far less bold attempt to restrict the rights of your Petitioners did not receive countenance from the Home Government, your Petitioners have every hope that the present attempt will meet with the same fate, and justice done to Your Lordship's Petitioners.

28. The other pernicious consequences indirectly connected with the Franchise Bill are too numerous to mention; your Petitioners would, however, crave leave to discuss a few.

29. It is a known fact that there is, in the Colony, a wide gulf between the European section of the community and the Indian. The Indian is hated and shunned by the European. He is often needlessly vexed and harassed. The Franchise Bill, your Petitioners submit, will only accentuate such a feeling. The signs have already begun to appear. To verify this, your Petitioners commend the newspapers

of the current dates to Your Lordship's attention, and also the debates in both the Honourable Houses.

30. It was said, in the course of the debate on the second reading, that the disqualification put upon the Indians would put a greater responsibility upon the legislators of the Colony and that the Indian interests would be better protected than if they were represented. This, Your Lordship's Petitioners beg to submit, is contrary to all experience up to the present time.

31. Some Honourable Members thought that the Indians should not be allowed to vote at the Municipal elections also. It was whispered, during the debate, among the responsible quarters, that that question would receive attention on a future, but early, date. The Franchise Bill is only the proverbial thin end of the wedge. Once driven a little, it would not be difficult to drive it through. That seemed to be the feeling.

32. Your Lordship is aware that it is intended to levy a residential tax on the Indians coming under indenture, should they choose to settle in the Colony. The tax, it was said, should be sufficiently heavy not to make it worth their while to stop in the Colony or to make it possible for them to compete with the Colonists. That is another indication of how your Petitioners' interests would be better protected if they were disenfranchised!

33. During the debate on the Civil Service Bill, it was contended by some Honourable Members that, since the Franchise was to be taken away from the Indians, it was as well that the Indians should be debarred from entering the Civil Service also. An amendment was moved to this effect, and was rejected only by the casting vote of the Honourable the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, thanks to the forethought and tact of the Government who requested that the House should be divided. Your Petitioners fully recognise that, in this case, the Government took up a very sympathetic attitude towards the Indians;

but still, the tendency and portents of these events are unmistakable. The Franchise Bill gave the opportunity for the amendment.

34. Your Lordship's Petitioners understand that in the Cape Colony no such colour or race distinctions are made.

35. Your Lordship's Petitioners respectfully venture to point out that the effect of the Bill, if it became law, will be simply disastrous to the interests of the British Indian subjects in the other parts of South Africa. Down-trodden and hated as they already are in the Transvaal, things will be simply unbearable for them. If Indian British subjects in a British Colony are allowed to be treated at all on an unequal footing, your Petitioners humbly submit that a time will soon come when it will be impossible for Indians, having any idea whatever of self-respect, to remain in the Colony and that such a thing would materially interfere with their business, and throw hundreds of Her Majesty's Indian subjects out of work.

36. In conclusion, your Petitioners hope that the above facts and arguments will convince Your Lordship of the injustice of the Franchise Law Amendment Bill, and that Your Lordship will not allow an unwarranted interference with the rights of one section of Her Majesty's subjects by another.

And for this act of justice and mercy, Your Lordship's Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, etc. etc.

HAJEE MOHAMED HAJEE DADA
AND SIXTEEN OTHERS

Enclosure No. 1 in Despatch No. 66 dated 31st July, 1894, from Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, Governor of Natal, to Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 189.

36. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

P. O. B. 253
DURBAN,
July 27, 1894

Confidential

TO

THE HON. MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI, M. P.

SIR,

In continuation of my letter of the 14th instant I have to inform you as follows:

The petition to the Home Government, a copy of which has already been sent to you, was sent, I hear, last week.

Mr. Escombe, the Attorney-General, has made a report to the effect — if the informant is right — that the only reason for passing the Bill is to prevent the Asiatics from controlling the government of the natives. The real reason, however, is simply this. They want to put the Indians under such disabilities and subject them to such insults that it may not be worth their while to stop in the Colony. Yet, they do not want to dispense with the Indians altogether. They certainly do not want those Indians who come on their own means and they want the indentured Indians very badly; but they would require, if they could, the indentured Indian to return to India after his term of indenture. A perfect leonine partnership! They know very well that they cannot do this at once — so they have begun with the Franchise Bill. They want to feel the pulse of the Home Government on the question. One member of the Assembly writes to me that he does not believe that the Home Government would sanction the Bill. I need hardly say how important it is for the Indian community that the Bill should not receive the sanction.

Natal is not a bad place for the Indians. Good many Indian traders earn a respectable living here. The Bill, if it became law, would be a very great blow to further Indian enterprise.

Of course, I may state again, as I have done once, that there is not the slightest probability of the government of the natives passing from the Europeans to the Indians. This is simply meant to frighten the Home Government. Those who live here — including the Government — know very well that such a thing will never happen. They do not want the Indians to elect White members — 2 or 3 — who may look after their interests in the Parliament, so that the Government may work their way towards the destruction of the Indians without any opposition whatever.

I have sent copies of the petition to Sir W. Wedderburn and others there and also some copies to Indian newspapers.

Please excuse the length of my letters. You will very much oblige me by giving hints as to the way of working.

I beg to remain,
Sir,
your faithful servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's own hand.

37. *THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS*

(ESTABLISHED 22ND AUGUST, 1894)

August 1894

PRESIDENT

Mr. Abdoola Hajee Adam

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Messrs. Hajee Mahomed Hajee Dada, Abdool Kadir, Hajee Dada Hajee Habib, Moosa Hajee Adam, P. Dawjee Mahomed, Peeran Mahomed, Murugesa

Pillay, Ramswamy Naidoo, Hoosen Miran, Adamjee Miankhan, K. R. Nayanah, Amod Bayat (P. M. Burg), Moosa Hajee Cassim, Mahomed Cassim Jeeva, Parsee Rustomjee, Dawad Mahomed, Hoosen Cassim Amod Tili, Doraiswamy Pillay, Omar Hajee Aba, Osmankhan Rahamatkhan, Rangaswamy Padayachi, Hajee Mahomed (P. M. Burg), Camroodeen (P. M. Burg.)

HON. SECRETARY
Mr. M. K. Gandhi

CONGRESS COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr. Abdoola Hajee Adam; *Hon. Secretary*: Mr. M. K. Gandhi; *Members of the Committee*: The Vice-Presidents and Messrs. M. D. Joshi, Narsiram, Manekji, Dowjee Mammuji Mutalah, Muthukrishna, Bissessar, Goolam Hoosen Randeri, Shamshoodeen, G. A. Bassa, Sarabjit, L. Gabriel, James Christopher, Sooboo Naidu, John Gabriel, Suleman Voraji, Cassimjee Amoojee, R. Kundaswamy Naidu, M. E. Kathrada, Ibrahim M. Khatri, Shaik Farid, Varind Ismail, Rajit, Perumal Naidoo, Parsee Dhanjisha, Royappan, Joosub Abdool Carim, Arjun Sing, Ismail Padia, Easop Ladua, Mahomed Esak, Mahomed Hafejee, M. Paruk, Suleman Dawjee, V. Narayana Pather, Lutchman Panday, Osman Ahmed & Mahomed Tayub.

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

Any person approving of the work of the Congress can become its member by paying the subscription and signing the membership-form. The monthly subscription is 5/- minimum and yearly £3.

THE OBJECTS OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

1. To promote concord and harmony among the

Indians and Europeans residing in the Colony.

2. To inform the people in India by writing to the newspapers, publishing pamphlets, and delivering lectures.

3. To induce Hindustanis—particularly Colonial-born Indians—to study the Indian history and literature relating to India.

4. To inquire into the conditions of the Indians and to take proper steps to remove their hardships.

5. To inquire into the conditions of the Indentured Indians and to take proper steps to alleviate their sufferings.

6. To help the poor and helpless in every reasonable way.

7. To do such work as would tend to improve the moral, social and political conditions of the Indians.

RULES AMENDED OR CANCELLED BY THE COMMITTEE AND RATIFIED BY THE CONGRESS

1. Authority is given to rent a Hall for Meetings for a sum not exceeding £10 monthly.

2. The Committee shall meet at least once every month.

3. The General Meeting of the Congress shall be held at least once every year—not necessarily in Durban.

4. The Hon. Secretary shall invite members from other parts of the Colony.

5. The Committee shall have the power to frame and pass rules and shall have all other powers of ordinary transaction.

6. The Committee shall have the power to appoint a paid Secretary at a reasonable salary.

7. The Hon. Secretary shall, if he chooses, invite a European who takes interest in the welfare of the Congress to be a Vice-President.

8. The Hon. Secretary shall, if he chooses, subscribe for the newspapers and books for the Congress Library out of the Congress Fund.

9. The Hon. Secretary shall record in the Account Book whether a cheque is signed by himself or jointly with the signature of another.

Rules Passed by the Committee

1. The Chairman shall preside at every meeting; in his absence the first member of the Committee; if he too be absent, then the second member and so on.

2. The Hon. Secretary shall, at the commencement of a meeting, read out the minutes of the last meeting after which the President shall sign it.

3. The Committee may not recognise a proposal or a resolution for which no notice had been given in advance to the Secretary for its introduction.

4. The Hon. Secretary shall read out a detailed account of moneys received or spent by the Committee or the Congress.

5. The Committee may not attend to a proposal unless such is proposed by a Committee member and seconded by another.

6. The Chairman and the Secretary shall be counted by virtue of their Offices as Committee members. In case of equal voting, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

7. Every member shall face the Chairman when addressing a meeting.

8. Every member shall use the word *Mr.* in addressing another member at a Committee meeting.

9. The proceedings of a Committee meeting shall be carried on in one or all of the following languages: Gujarati, Tamil, Hindustani and English.

10. If it be deemed necessary, the Chairman shall order a member to translate the speech of another member.

11. Every proposal or resolution shall pass by a majority of votes.

12. When the Congress has £50 minimum in hand, the Hon. Secretary shall deposit such amount in any Bank

he chooses in the name of the Natal Indian Congress.

13. The Hon. Secretary shall be held responsible for any moneys he has not deposited in the Bank.

14. An authority shall be first obtained from the Committee for any irregular expenditure exceeding the sum of £5. If any expenses are incurred exceeding the above sum by the Chairman or the Secretary without the sanction and approval of the Committee, it shall be held that he did it at his own responsibility. The Hon. Secretary shall sign cheques up to the sum of £5, and for any amount exceeding the said sum [they] shall be signed jointly with any of the following members: Messrs. Abdoola Hajee Adam, Moosa Hajee Cassim, Abdool Kadar, Colundaveloo Pillay, P. Dawjee Mahomed, Hoosen Cassim.

15. A quorum shall be formed of ten members, in addition to the Chairman and the Secretary, to carry on the work of the meeting.

16. The Hon. Secretary shall issue notice of a proposed meeting not later than two days in advance.

17. It shall be held that the 16th rule was observed provided a written notification was given through the post or a messenger.

18. Any Committee member who is absent from six consecutive meetings shall be liable to have his name struck off the list (after having been notified by the Committee of such intention). A member who is absent from a meeting shall show the cause of his absence at the next meeting.

19. Any member who fails to pay his subscription for three consecutive months without showing any reasonable ground shall cease to be a member.

20. No smoking shall be allowed at any Committee meeting.

21. If two members get up simultaneously to speak, the Chairman shall decide who is to speak first.

22. If a sufficient number of members is present the

Committee meeting shall proceed at its appointed hour. However, if the sufficient number is deficient at the appointed time or half an hour after it, the meeting shall terminate without any transaction.

23. The Natal Indian Association may use the Hall and the Library free of charge, and they, in return, shall give their reasonable services such as doing writing work, etc.

24. All the members of the Congress shall be entitled to use the Congress Library.

25. The Committee members shall sit in an enclosure and the onlookers outside. The onlookers must not take any part in the proceedings. Should they create any disturbance by shouting etc., they shall be liable to be expelled from the Hall.

26. The Committee shall have the power to amend these rules in future.

From a photostat of a typewritten copy. A photostat of a draft in Gandhiji's handwriting is also available.

38. "RAMMYSAMMY"

DURBAN,
October 25, 1894

TO

THE EDITOR
The Times of Natal

SIR,

I would, with your permission, venture to make a few remarks on your leader, entitled "Rammysammy", in your issue of the 22nd inst.

I have no wish to defend the article in *The Times of India* noticed by you; but is not your very leader its sufficient defence? Does not the very heading "Rammy-

sammy" betray a studied contempt towards the poor Indian? Is not the whole article a needless insult to him? You are pleased to acknowledge that "India possesses men of high culture, etc." and yet you would not, if you could, give them equal political power with the White man. Do you not thus make the insult doubly insulting? If you had thought that the Indians were not cultured, but were barbarous brutes, and on that ground denied them political equality, there would be some excuse for your opinions. You, however, in order to enjoy the fullest pleasures derived from offering an insult to an inoffensive people, must needs show that you acknowledge them to be intelligent people and yet would keep them under foot.

Then you have said that the Indians in the Colony are not the same as those in India; but, Sir, you conveniently forget that they are the brothers or descendants of the same race whom you credit with intelligence, and have, therefore, given the opportunity, the potentiality of becoming as capable as their more fortunate brethren in India, just as a man sunk in the depth of ignorance and vice of the East End of London has the potentiality of becoming Prime Minister in free England.

You put upon the franchise petition to Lord Ripon an interpretation it was never meant to convey. The Indians do not regret that capable natives can exercise the franchise. They would regret if it were otherwise. They, however, assert that they too, if capable, should have the right. You, in your wisdom, would not allow the Indian or the native the precious privilege under any circumstances, because they have a dark skin. You would look to the exterior only. So long as the skin is white it would not matter to you whether it conceals beneath it poison or nectar. To you the lip-prayer of the pharisee[1], because

[1] The pharisee, a Jewish priest, believed only in the outward show of religion, while the publican, a sinner, sincerely wept for his sins.



GANDHIJI WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY, 1890



FOUNDERS OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS, 1895

3

The Natal Indian Congress

SM 141
LM 77

Established
22nd August 1894 AD

President

Mr Abdulla Hajee Adam

Vice Presidents

Mr Haji Mahomed Haji Dada
" Abdul Kadir
" Haji Dada Haji Habib
" Parsee Rustomjee
" P. Dowjee Mamad
" Peerun Mahomed
" Dorasamy Pillay
" Ramsamy Naidoo
" Hoosen Meerun
" Adamjee Miankhan
" Naynah

Mr Moosa Haji Cassim
" Mahomed Cassim Jeeva
" Dawad Mahomed
" Moosa Haji Adam
" [illegible] Chinnia
" Amod Tilly
" Murugasa Pillay
" Hussain Haji Abba
" [illegible] Rahamat Khan
" Rangasamy Padayachi

Hon. Secretary

Mr M. K. Gandhi

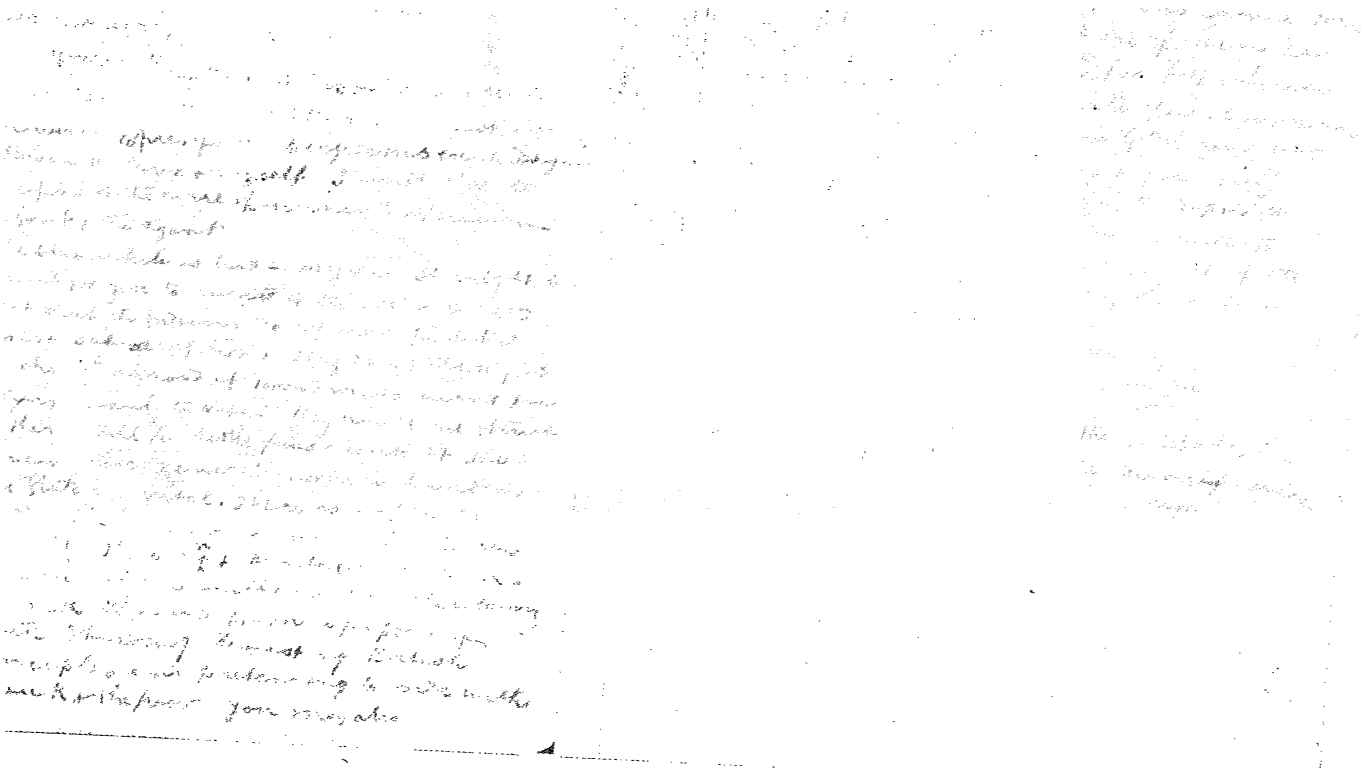
Congress Committee

Chairman

Mr Abdulla Hajee Adam

Hon. Secretary Mr M. K. Gandhi

FRONT PAGE OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS



LETTER TO NAZAR

he is one, is more acceptable than the sincere repentance of the publican, and this, I presume, you would call Christianity. You may; it is not Christ's.

And in spite of such opinions held by you, a respectable newspaper in the Colony, you impute falsehood to *The Times of India*. It is one thing to formulate a charge, it is another to prove it.

You end with saying that "Rammysammy" may have every right a citizen can desire, with one exception, viz., "political power". Are the heading of your leader and its tenor consistent with the above opinion? Or is it un-Christian, un-English to be consistent? "Suffer little children to come unto me," said the Master. His disciples (?) in the Colony would improve upon the saying by inserting "white" after "little". During the children's *fete*, organized by the Mayor of Durban, I am told there was not a single coloured child to be seen in the procession. Was this a punishment for the sin of being born of coloured parents? Is this an incident of the qualified citizenship you would accord to the hated "Rammysammy"?

If He came among us, will He not say to many of us, "I know you not"? Sir, may I venture to offer a suggestion? Will you re-read your New Testament? Will you ponder over your attitude towards the coloured population of the Colony? Will you then say you can reconcile it with the Bible teaching or the best British traditions? If you have washed your hands clean of both Christ and British traditions, I can have nothing to say; I gladly withdraw what I have written. Only it will then be a sad day for Britain and for India if you have many followers.

Yours, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Times of Natal, 26-10-1894

39. LETTER TO NAZAR

DURBAN,
November 12, 1894

DEAR MR. NAZAR,

Your letter of the fourth instant. You must have received my telegram last evening. Herewith copies of the telegrams exchanged between the Government and myself. I would like to see copies of the correspondence between the Government and the agent.

The Star article is bad—very bad. It might be as well for you to write to the Editor to the effect that the Indians do not need public ...[1] and subscriptions. They do not trumpet their charity abroad. If 10,000 Indians went from the Transvaal to Natal, they would not starve and yet there would be little fuss about it. The Indians have never become a burden on the State in Natal. There is no poor law in India, the poorest as the country is in the world. The silent and, therefore, Christian Indian charity is well-known. The calumny comes with ill grace from a paper of the *Star*'s standing, boasting British principles and pretending to side with the weak and the poor. You may also tell the Editor that 100—about 100—Indians came from Johannesburg yesterday. And not one of them had to starve or search for help, whereas the authorities have to make special provision for the poor Whites. And, finally, tell them that the Natal Government thought better, and gracefully, though tardily, suspended the deposit of £10. It might also be as well to

[1] The word here is illegible.

write to the *Leader* informing it of the Government's decision and expressing thanks and satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

I trust you have corrected the mistakes in the *Leader*. The 'Dr' has created a wrong impression.

M. K. G.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's own hand.

40. *THE ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION*

DURBAN,
November 26, 1894

TO

THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

You will greatly oblige me by allowing me to draw the attention of your readers to an advertisement that appears in your advertisement columns with regard to the Esoteric Christian Union. The system of thought expounded by the books advertised is not, by any means, a new system but a recovery of the old, presented in a form acceptable to the modern mind. It is, moreover, a system of religion which teaches universality, and is based on eternal verities and not on phenomena or historical facts merely. In that system, there is no reviling Mahomed or Buddha in order to prove the superiority of Jesus. On the other hand, it reconciles the other religions with Christianity which, in the opinion of the authors, is nothing but one mode (among many) of presentation of the same eternal truth. The many puzzles of the Old Testament find herein a solution at once complete and satisfactory.

If there is anyone of your readers who has found the present-day materialism and all its splendour to be insufficient for the needs of his soul, if he has a craving for a better life, and if, under the dazzling and bright surface of modern civilization, he finds that there is much that is contrary to what one would expect under such a surface, and above all, if the modern luxuries and the ceaseless feverish activity afford no relief, to such a one I beg to recommend the books referred to. And I promise that, after a perusal, he will find himself a better man, even though he may not thoroughly identify himself with the teaching.

If there is anyone who would like to have a chat on the subject, it would afford me the greatest pleasure to have a quiet interchange of views. In such a case, I would thank any such gentleman to correspond with me personally. I need hardly mention that the sale of the books is not a pecuniary concern. Could Mr. Maitland, the President of the Union, or its agent here, afford to give them away, they would gladly do so. In many cases, the books have been sold at less than cost price. In a few, they have even been given away. A systematic distribution for nothing has been found impossible. The books will be gladly lent in some cases.

I would try to conclude with a quotation from a letter of the late Abbe Constant to the authors: "Humanity has always and everywhere asked itself these three supreme questions: Whence come we? What are we? Whither go we? Now these questions at length find an answer complete, satisfactory, and consolatory in *The Perfect Way.*"

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 3-12-1894

41. *BOOKS FOR SALE*

DURBAN, NATAL

The following books by the late Mrs. Anna Kingsford and Mr. Edward Maitland are offered for sale at their published prices. They are introduced in South Africa for the first time:

The Perfect Way, 7/6

Clothed With the Sun, 7/6

The Story of the New Gospel of Interpretation, 2/6

The New Gospel of Interpretation, 1/-

The Bible's Own Account of Itself, 1/-

The following are some of the opinions concerning the books:

"A fountain of light (*The Perfect Way*) interpretative and reconciliatory... No student of divine things can dispense with it."

—*Light*, London

"Unequalled as a means of grace amongst all the English books of the century." —*Occult World*

Some pamphlets bearing on the subject can be had free of charge at my office.

M. K. GANDHI

AGENT FOR THE ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION AND THE LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY

The Natal Mercury, 28-11-1894

42. OPEN LETTER

DURBAN,
[*December 1894*][1]

TO

THE HON. MEMBERS OF THE HON. THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND THE HON. THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SIRS,

Were it possible to write to you anonymously, nothing would have been more pleasing to me. But the statements I shall have to make in this letter will be so grave and important that it would be considered a sheer act of cowardice not to disclose my name. I beg, however, to assure you that I write not from selfish motives, nor yet from those of self-aggrandisement or of seeking notoriety. The one and only object is to serve India, which is by accident of birth called my native country, and to bring about a better understanding between the European section of the community and the Indian in this Colony.

The only way this can be done is to appeal to those who represent and, at the same time, mould public opinion.

Hence, if the Europeans and the Indians live in a perpetual state of quarrel, the blame would lie on your shoulders. If both can walk together and live together quietly and without friction, you will receive all the credit.

It needs no proof that masses throughout the world follow, to a very great extent, the opinions of the leaders. Gladstone's opinions are the opinions of half England, and Salisbury's are those of the other half. A Burns thought for the strikers during the dock labourers' strike. Parnell thought for almost the whole of Ireland. The scriptures—I mean all the scriptures of the world—say so.

[1] Since this was circulated among Europeans in Natal on December 19, 1894 (*vide* p.164, *infra*), it should have been ready before that date.

Says *The Song Celestial*[1] by Edwin Arnold: "What the wise choose the unwise people take; what the best men do the multitude will follow."

This letter, therefore, needs no apology. It would hardly be called impertinent.

For, to whom else could such an appeal be more aptly made, or by whom else should it be considered more seriously than you?

To carry on an agitation in England is but a poor relief when it can only create a greater friction between the two peoples in the Colony. The relief, at best, could only be temporary. Unless the Europeans in the Colony can be induced to accord the Indians a better treatment, the Indians have a very bad time before them under the aegis of the Responsible Government, in spite of the vigilance of the Home Government.

Without entering into details, I would deal with the Indian question as a whole.

I suppose there can be no doubt that the Indian is a despised being in the Colony, and that every opposition to him proceeds directly from that hatred.

If that hatred is simply based upon his colour, then, of course, he has no hope. The sooner he leaves the Colony the better. No matter what he does, he will never have the white skin. If, however, it is based upon something else, if it is based upon an ignorance of his general character and attainments, he may hope to receive his due at the hands of the Europeans in the Colony.

The question what use the Colony will make of the 40,000 Indians is, I submit, worthy of the most serious consideration by the Colonists, and especially those who have the reins of Government in their hands, who have been entrusted by the people with legislative powers. To root out the 40,000 Indians from the Colony seems, with-

[1] An English rendering in verse of the *Bhagavadgita*.

out doubt, an impossible task. Most of them have settled here with their families. No legislation that could be permissible in a British Colony would enable the legislators to drive these men out. It may be possible to devise a scheme to effectively check any further Indian immigration. But apart from that, the question suggested by me is, I submit, sufficiently serious to warrant my encroaching upon your attention and requesting you to peruse this letter without any bias.

It is for you to say whether you will lower them or raise them in the scale of civilization, whether you will bring them down to a level lower than what they should occupy on account of heredity, whether you will alienate their hearts from you, or whether you will draw them closer to you—whether, in short, you would govern them despotically or sympathetically.

You can educate public opinion in such a way that the hatred will be increased day by day; and you can, if you chose so to do, educate it in such a way that the hatred would begin to subside.

I now propose to discuss the question under the following heads:

1. Are the Indians desirable as citizens in the Colony?

2. What are they?

3. Is their present treatment in accordance with the best British traditions, or with the principles of justice and morality, or with the principles of Christianity?

4. From a purely material and selfish point of view, will an abrupt or gradual withdrawal of them from the Colony result in substantial, lasting benefit to the Colony?

I

In discussing the first question, I will deal, first of all, with the Indians employed as labourers, most of whom have come to the Colony under indenture.

It seems to have been acknowledged by those who are supposed to know, that the indentured Indians are indispensable for the welfare of the Colony; whether as menials or waiters, whether as railway servants or gardeners, they are a useful addition to the Colony. The work that a native cannot or would not do is cheerfully and well done by the indentured Indian. It would seem that the Indian has helped to make this the Garden Colony of South Africa. Withdraw the Indian from the sugar estate, and where would the main industry of the Colony be? Nor can it be said that the work can be done by the native in the near future. The South African Republic is an instance in point. In spite of its so-called vigorous native policy, it remains practically a desert of dust, although the soil is very fruitful. The problem how to secure cheap labour for the mines there has been daily growing serious. The only garden worthy of the name is that on the Nelmapius Estate, and does it not owe its success entirely to the Indian labour? One of the election addresses says:

> . . . and at the last, as the only thing to be done, the immigration of Indians was entered upon, and the Legislature very wisely rendered their support and help in furthering this all-important scheme. At the time it was entered upon *the progress and almost the existence of the Colony hung in the balance*. And now what is the result of this scheme of immigration? Financially, £10,000 has been advanced yearly out of the Treasury of the Colony. With what result? Just this, that no vote ever made of money to develop the industries of the Colony, or to promote its interest in any way in this Colony, has yielded such a financially profitable return as that shown by the introduction of coolies as labourers into this Colony. . . . I believe the Durban population of Europeans, had no such labour been supplied as required for Colonial industries, would be less by at least half what it is to-day, and five workmen only would be required where twenty now have employment. Property in Durban generally would have remained at a value some 300 or 400 per cent below that which now obtains, and the lands in the Colony and other towns in proportion according to the value of property in Durban, and coast land would never have realized what it now sells at.

This gentleman [quoted above] is no other than Mr. Garland. In spite of such invaluable help derived from "the coolie", as the poor Indian is contemptuously termed even by those who ought to know better, the honourable gentleman goes on, ungratefully, to regret the tendency of the Indian to settle in the Colony.

I take the following extract from Mr. Johnston's article in the *New Review*, quoted in *The Natal Mercury* of the 11th August, 1894:

> One seeks the solution in the introduction of a yellow race, able to stand a tropical climate and intelligent enough to undertake those special avocations which in temperate climates would be filled by Europeans. The yellow race, most successful hitherto in Eastern Africa, is the native of Hindostan—that race in divers types and divers religions which, under British or Portuguese aegis, has created and developed the commerce of the East African littoral. The immigration of the docile, kindly, thrifty, industrious, clever-fingered, sharp-witted Indian into Central Africa will furnish us with the solid core of our armed forces in that continent, and will supply us with the telegraph clerks, the petty shopkeepers, the skilled artisans, the cooks, the minor employees, the clerks, and the railway officials needed in the civilized administration of tropical Africa. The Indian, liked by both black and White, will serve as a link between these two divergent races.

As to the Indian traders, who are miscalled Arabs, it would appear best to consider the objections raised to their coming to the Colony.

From the papers, especially *The Natal Mercury* of 6-7-'94, and *The Natal Advertiser* of 15-9-'93, the objections appear to be that they are successful traders, and that, their mode of living being very simple, they compete with the European trader in petty trades. I dismiss as unworthy of consideration the generalizations from rare particular instances that the Indians resort to sharp practices. As to the particular instances of insolvency, I would only say, without meaning in the least to defend them, "let those that are without sin first cast a stone". Please examine the records of the Insolvency Court.

Coming to the serious objection as to successful competition, I believe it is true. But is that a reason for driving them out of the Colony? Will such a method commend itself to a body of civilized men? What is it that makes them so successful competitors? He who runs may see that it is nothing but their habits, which are extremely simple, though not barbarous, as *The Natal Advertiser* would have it. The chiefest element of their success, in my humble opinion, is their total abstinence from drink and its attendant evils. That habit at once causes an enormous saving of money. Moreover, their tastes are simple, and they are satisfied with comparatively small profits, because they do not keep uselessly large establishments. In short, they earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. It is difficult to see how these facts can be urged as an objection to their stopping in the Colony. Of course, they do not gamble, as a rule do not smoke, and can put up with little inconveniences; work more than eight hours a day. Should they be expected to, is it desirable that they should, abandon these virtues, and contract the terrible vices under which the Western nations are groaning, so that they may be permitted to live in the Colony without molestation?

It will be best, also, to consider the common objection to the Indian traders and labourers. It is their insanitary habits. I am afraid I must, to my great mortification, admit this charge partially. While much that is said against their insanitary habits proceeds merely out of spite and hatred, there is no denying that in this respect they are not everything that could be desired. That, however, never can be a reason for their expulsion from the Colony. They are not hopelessly beyond reform in this branch. A strict, yet just and merciful, operation of the sanitary law can, I submit, effectually cope with the evil, and even eradicate it. Nor is the evil so great as to require any drastic measures. Their personal habits, it would appear, are not dirty, except in the case of the indentured Indians, who are too poor

to attend to personal cleanliness. I may be allowed to say, from personal experience, that the trading community are compelled by their religion to bathe once a week at least, and have to perform ablutions, i.e., wash their faces and hands up to the elbows, and their feet, every time they offer prayers. They are supposed to offer prayers four times a day, and there are very few who fail to do so at least twice a day.

It will, I hope, be readily admitted that they are exceptionally free from those vices which render a community a danger to society. They yield to no one in their obedience to constitutional authority. They are never a political danger. And except the ruffians who are sometimes picked out, of course unknowingly, by the immigration agents at Calcutta and Madras, they seem to be free from the highly grievous offences. I regret that my inability to compare the Criminal Court statistics prevents me from making any further observations on this point. I will, however, beg leave to quote from the *Natal Almanac*: "It must be said for the Indian population that it is on the whole orderly and law-abiding."

I submit that the above facts show that the Indian labourers are not only desirable but useful citizens of the Colony, and also absolutely essential to its well-being, and that the traders have nothing in them that should render them undesirable in the Colony.

As to these latter, before quitting the subject, I would further add that they are a veritable blessing to the poor portion of the European community, in so far as by their keen competition they keep down the prices of necessities of life; and knowing their language and understanding their customs, are indispensable to the Indian labourers, whose wants they study and supply, and whom they can deal with on better terms than the Europeans.

II

The second head of the enquiry is the most important, viz., what are they, and I request you to peruse it carefully. My purpose in writing on this subject will have been served if only it stimulates a study of India and its people; for, I thoroughly believe that one half, or even three-fourths, of the hardships entailed upon the Indians in South Africa result from want of information about India.

No one can be more conscious than myself of whom I am addressing this letter to. Some Honourable Members may resent this portion of my letter as an insult. To such I say with the greatest deference: "I am aware that you know a great deal about India. But is it not a cruel fact that the Colony is not the better for your knowledge? Certainly the Indians are not, unless the knowledge acquired by you is entirely different from and opposed to that acquired by others who have worked on the same field. Again, although this humble effort is directly addressd to you, it is supposed to reach many others, in fact all who have an interest in the future of the Colony with its present inhabitants."

In spite of the Premier's opinion to the contrary, as expressed in his speech at the second reading of the Franchise Bill, with the utmost deference to His Honour, I venture to point out that both the English and the Indians spring from a common stock, called the Indo-Aryan. I would not be able, in support of the above, to give extracts from many authors, as the books of reference at my disposal are unfortunately very few. I, however, quote as follows from Sir W. W. Hunter's *Indian Empire*:

> This nobler race (meaning the early Aryans) belonged to the Aryan or Indo-Germanic stock, from which the Brahman, the Rajput, and the Englishman alike descend. Its earliest home visible to history was in Central Asia. From that common camping ground certain branches of the race started for the East, others

for the West. One of the Western offshoots founded the Persian Kingdom; another built Athens and Lacedaemon, and became the Hellenic nation; a third went on to Italy and reared the city on the seven hills, which grew into Imperial Rome. A distant colony of the same race excavated the silver ores of prehistoric Spain; and when we first catch a sight of ancient England, we see an Aryan settlement, fishing in wattle canoes and working the tin mines of Cornwall.

The forefathers of the Greek and the Roman, of the Englishman and the Hindoo, dwelt together in Asia, spoke the same tongue, and worshipped the same gods.

The ancient religions of Europe and India had a similar origin.

Thus, it will be seen that the learned historian, who must be supposed to have consulted all the authorities, without a shadow of doubt makes the above unqualified assertion. If then I err, I err in good company. And the belief, whether mistaken or well-founded, serves as the basis of operations of those who are trying to unify the hearts of the two races, which are, legally and outwardly, bound together under a common flag.

A general belief seems to prevail in the Colony that the Indians are little better, if at all, than savages or the natives of Africa. Even the children are taught to believe in that manner, with the result that the Indian is being dragged down to the position of a raw Kaffir.

Such a state of things, which the Christian legislators of the Colony would not, I firmly believe, wittingly allow to exist and remain, must be my excuse for the following copious extracts, which will show at once that the Indians were, and are, in no way inferior to their Anglo-Saxon brethren, if I may venture to use the word, in the various departments of life—industrial, intellectual, poetical, &c.

As to the Indian philosophy and religion, the learned author of the *Indian Empire* thus sums up:

The Brahman solutions to the problems of practical religion were self-discipline, alms, sacrifice to and contemplation of the Deity. But, besides the practical questions of the spiritual life, religion has

also intellectual problems, such as the compatibility of evil with the goodness of God, and the unequal distribution of happiness and misery in this life. Brahman philosophy has exhausted the possible solutions of these difficulties, and of most of the other great problems which have since perplexed the Greek and Roman sage, mediaeval schoolman and *modern man of science* (the italics are mine). The various hypotheses of creation, arrangement and development were each elaborated, and the *views of physiologists at the present day are a return with new lights to the evolution theory of Kapila* (the italics are again mine). The works on religion published in the native languages in India in 1877 numbered 1192, besides 56 on mental and moral philosophy. In 1882 the totals had risen to 1545 on religion and 153 on mental and moral philosophy.

Max Muller says with regard to Indian philosophy (the following, and a few more that will follow, have been partly or wholly quoted in the Franchise petition):

> If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant—I should point to India; and if I were to ask myself from what literature we here in Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human—a life not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life—again I should point to India.

The German philosopher, Schopenhauer, thus adds his testimony to the grandeur of Indian philosophy as contained in the *Upanishads:*

> From every sentence deep, original and sublime thoughts arise, and the whole is pervaded by a high and holy and earnest spirit. Indian air surrounds us, and original thoughts of kindred spirits. . . . In the whole world there is no study, except that of the originals, so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Oupnekhat[1]. It has been the solace of my life; it will be the solace of my death.

[1] *Upanishad.*

Coming to science, Sir William says:

> The science of language, indeed, had been reduced in India to fundamental principles at a time when the grammarians of the West still treated it on the basis of accidental resemblances, and modern philosophy dates from the study of Sanscrit by European scholars. . . . The grammar of Panini stands supreme among the grammars of the world. . . . It arranges in logical harmony the whole phenomena which the Sanscrit language presents, and stands forth as one of the most splendid achievements of human invention and industry.

Speaking on the same department of science, Sir H. S. Maine, in his Rede lecture, published in the latest edition of the *Village-Communities*, says:

> India has given to the world Comparative Philology and Comparative Mythology; it may yet give us a new science not less valuable than the sciences of language and of folk-lore. I hesitate to call it Comparative Jurisprudence because, if it ever exists, its area will be so much wider than the field of law. For India not only contains (or to speak more accurately, did contain) an Aryan language older than any other descendant of the common mother-tongue, and a variety of names of natural objects less perfectly crystallized than elsewhere into fabulous personages, but it includes a whole world of Aryan institutions, Aryan customs, Aryan laws, Aryan ideas, Aryan beliefs, in a far earlier stage of growth and development than any which survive beyond its borders.

Of Indian astronomy the same historian [Hunter] says:

> The astronomy of the Brahmans has formed alternately the subject of excessive admiration and of misplaced contempt. . . . In certain points the Brahmans advanced beyond Greek astronomy. Their fame spread throughout the West, and found entrance into the *Chronicon Paschale*. In the 8th and 9th centuries the Arabs became their disciples.

> In algebra and arithmetic (I again quote Sir William) the Brahmans attained to a high degree of proficiency independent of Western aid. To them we owe the invention of the numerical symbols on the decimal system. . . . The Arabs borrowed these figures from the Hindus, and transmitted them to Europe. . . . The works on mathematics and mechanical science, published in the native languages in India in 1877 numbered 89, and in 1882, 166.

> The medical science of the Brahmans (continues the eminent historian) was also an independent development. . . . The specific diseases whose names occur in Panini's grammar indicate that medical studies had made progress before his time (350 B.C.). . . . Arabic medicine was founded on the translations from the Sanscrit treatises. . . . European medicine down to the 17th century was based upon the Arabic. . . . The number of medical works published in the native languages of India in 1877 amounted to 130, and in 1882 to 212, besides 87 on natural science.

Writing of the art of war, the writer proceeds:

> The Brahmans regarded not only medicine but also the arts of war, music, and architecture as supplementary parts of their divinely inspired knowledge. . . . The Sanscrit epics prove that strategy had attained to the position of a recognised science before the birth of Christ, and the later *Agni Purana* devotes long sections to its systematic treatment.
>
> The Indian art of music was destined to exercise a wider influence. . . . This notation passed from the Brahmans through the Persians to Arabia, and was thence introduced into European music by Guido d' Arezzo at the beginning of the 11th century.

On architecture the same author says:

> The Buddhists were the great stone builders of India. Their monasteries and shrines exhibit the history of the art during twenty-two centuries, from the earliest cave structures of the rock temples to the latest Jain erections dazzling in stucco, over-crowded with ornament. It seems not improbable that the churches of Europe owe their steeples to the Buddhist topes. . . . Hindu art has left memorials which extort the admiration and astonishment of our age.
>
> The Hindu palace architecture of Gwalior, the Indian Mahomedan mosques, the mausoleums of Agra and Delhi, with several of the older Hindu temples of Southern India, stand unrivalled for grace of outline and elaborate wealth of ornament.
>
> English decorative art in our day has borrowed largely from Indian forms and patterns. . . . Indian art works, when faithful to native designs, still obtain the highest honours at the international exhibitions of Europe.

Here is what Andrew Carnegie in his *Round the World* says about the Taj of Agra:

> There are some subjects too sacred for analysis, or even for words. And I now know that there is a human structure so exquisitely

fine or unearthly, as to lift it unto this holy domain. . . . The Taj is built of a light creamy marble, so that it does not chill one as pure cold white marble does. It is warm and sympathetic as a woman. . . . One great critic has freely called the Taj a feminine structure. There is nothing masculine about it, says he; its charms are all feminine. This creamy marble is inlaid with fine black marble lines, the entire Koran, in Arabic letters, it is said, being thus interwoven. . . . Till the day I die, amid mountain streams or moonlight strolls in the forest, wherever and whenever the mood comes, when all that is most sacred, most elevated and most pure recur to shed their radiance upon the tranquil mind, there will be found among my treasures the memory of that lovely charm—the Taj.

Nor has India been without its laws, codified or otherwise. The Institutes of Manu have always been noted for their justice and precision. So much does Sir H. S. Maine seem to have been struck with their equity that he calls them "an ideal picture of that which, in the view of the Brahmans, ought to be the law". Mr. Pincott, writing in 1891 in *The National Review,* alludes to them as "the philosophical precepts of Manu".

Nor have the Indians been deficient in the dramatic art. Goethe thus speaks of *Shakuntala,* the most famous Indian drama:

Wouldst thou the young year's blossoms,
and the fruits of its decline,
And all by which the soul is charmed, enraptured,
feasted, fed,
Wouldst thou the earth, and heaven itself
in one sole name combine?
I name thee, O Shakuntala! and all at once is said.

Coming to the Indian character and social life, the evidence is voluminous. I can only give meagre extracts.

I take the following again from Hunter's *Indian Empire*:

The Greek ambassador (Megasthenes) observed with admiration the absence of slavery in India, and the chastity of the women and the courage of the men. In valour they excelled all other Asiatics; they required no locks to their doors; above all, no Indian

was ever known to tell a lie. Sober and industrious, good farmers and skilful artisans, they scarcely ever had recourse to a lawsuit, and lived peaceably under their native chiefs. The kingly government is portrayed almost as described in Manu, with its hereditary castes of councillors and soldiers. . . . The village system is well described, each little rural unit *seeming to the Greek an independent republic.* (The italics are mine.)

Bishop Heber says of the people of India:

So far as their natural character is concerned, I have been led to form on the whole a very favourable opinion. They are men of high and gallant courage, courteous, intelligent, and most eager after knowledge and improvement. . . They are sober, industrious, dutiful to their parents, and affectionate to their children; of tempers almost uniformly gentle and patient, and more easily affected by kindness and attention to their wants and feelings than almost any men whom I have met with.

Sir Thomas Munro, sometime Governor of Madras, says:

I do not exactly know what is meant by civilizing the people of India. In the theory and practice of good government they may be deficient, but if a good system of agriculture, if unrivalled manufactures, if a capacity to produce what convenience and luxury demand, if the establishment of schools for reading and writing, if the general practice of kindness and hospitality, and, above all, if a scrupulous respect and delicacy towards the female sex, are amongst the points that denote a civilized people, then the Hindus are not inferior in civilization to the people of Europe.

Sir George Birdwood gives the following opinion on the general character of the Indians:

They are long-suffering and patient, hardy and enduring, frugal and industrious, law-abiding and peace-seeking. . . . The educated and higher mercantile classes are honest and truthful, and loyal and trustful towards the British Government, in the most absolute sense that I can use, and you understand the words. Moral truthfulness is as marked a characteristic of the Settia (upper) class of Bombay as of the Teutonic race itself. The people of India, in short, are in no intrinsic sense our inferiors, while in things measured by some of the false standards—false to ourselves—we pretend to believe in, they are our superiors.

Sir C. Trevelyan remarks that:

They have very considerable administrative qualities, great patience, great industry, and great acuteness and intelligence.

Of the family relations, thus speaks Sir W. W. Hunter:

> There is simply no comparison between Englishmen and Hindus with respect to the place occupied by family interests and family affections in their minds. The love of parents for children and of children for parents has scarcely any counterpart in England. Parental and filial affection occupies among our Eastern fellow-citizens the place which is taken in this country by the passion between the sexes.

And Mr. Pincott thinks that:

> In all social matters the English are far more fitted to sit at the feet of Hindus and learn as disciples than to attempt to become masters.

Says M. Louis Jacolliot:

> Soil of ancient India, cradle of humanity, hail ! Hail ! venerable and efficient nurse, whom centuries of brutal invasions have not yet buried under the dust of oblivion. Hail, fatherland of faith, of love, of poetry, and of science ! May we hail a revival of thy past in our Western future!

Says Victor Hugo:

> These nations have made Europe, France and Germany. Germany is for the Occident that which India is for the Orient.

Add to this the facts that India has produced a Buddha, whose life some consider the best and the holiest lived by a mortal, and some to be second only to that lived by Jesus; that India has produced an Akbar, whose policy the British Government have followed with but few modifications; that India lost, only a few years ago, a Parsee Baronet who astonished not India only, but England also, by his munificent charities; that India has produced Christodas Paul, a journalist, whom Lord Elgin, the present Viceroy, compared with the best European journalists; that India has produced Justices Mahomed and Muthukrishna Ayer[1], both Judges of High Courts in India, whose judgments have been pronounced to be the ablest delivered by the Judges, both European and Indian, who adorn the Indian Bench;

[1] The reference is to Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyer.

and, lastly, India has in Baddruddin [Tyabji], [Surendranath] Banerji, and [Pherozeshah] Mehta, orators who have on many an occasion held English audiences spellbound.

Such is India. If the picture appears to you to be somewhat overdrawn or fanciful, it is none the less faithful. There is the other side. Let him who takes delight in separating, rather than in uniting, the two nations give the other side. Then, please, examine both with the impartiality of a Daniel, and I promise that there will yet remain a considerable portion of what has been said above untouched, to induce you to believe that India is not Africa, and that it is a civilized country in the truest sense of the term *civilization.*

Before, however, I can quit this subject, I have to crave leave to be allowed to anticipate a possible objection. It will be said : "If what you say is true, the people whom you call Indians in the Colony are not Indians, because your remarks are not borne out by the practices prevailing among the people whom you call Indians. See how grossly untruthful they are." Everyone I have met with in the Colony has dwelt upon the untruthfulness of the Indians. To a limited extent I admit the charge. It will be very small satisfaction for me to show, in reply to the objection, that other classes do not fare much better in this respect, especially if and when they are placed in the position of the unfortunate Indians. And yet, I am afraid, I shall have to fall back upon argument of that sort. Much as I would wish them to be otherwise, I confess my utter inability to prove that they are more than human. They come to Natal on starvation wages (I mean here the indentured Indians). They find themselves placed in a strange position and amid uncongenial surroundings. *The moment they leave India* they remain throughout life, if they settle in the Colony, without any moral education. Whether they are Hindus or Mahomedans, they are absolutely without any moral or religious instruction worthy of the name. They have not learnt

enough to educate themselves without any outside help. Placed thus, they are apt to yield to the slightest temptation to tell a lie. After some time, lying with them becomes a habit and a disease. They would lie without any reason, without any prospect of bettering themselves materially, indeed, without knowing what they are doing. They reach a stage in life when their moral faculties have completely collapsed owing to neglect. There is also a very sad form of lying. They cannot dare tell the truth, even for their wantonly ill-treated brother, for fear of receiving ill-treatment from their master. They are not philosophic enough to look with equanimity on the threatened reduction in their miserable rations and severe corporal punishment, did they dare to give evidence against their master. Are these men, then, more to be despised than pitied? Are they to be treated as scoundrels, deserving no mercy, or are they to be treated as helpless creatures, badly in need of sympathy? Is there any class of people who would not do as they are doing under similar circumstances?

But I will be asked what I can have to say in defence of the traders, who, too, are equally good liars. As to this, I beg to submit that the charge against them is without foundation, and that they do not lie more than the other classes do for the purposes of trade or law. They are very much misunderstood; in the first place, because they cannot speak the English language, and secondly, because the interpretation is very defective, through no fault of the interpreters. The interpreters are expected to perform the herculean task of interpreting successfully in four languages, viz., Tamil, Telugu, Hindustani, and Gujarati. The trading Indian invariably speaks Hindustani or Gujarati. Those who speak Hindustani only, speak high Hindustani. The interpreters, with one exception, speak the local Hindustani, which is a grotesque mixture of Tamil, Gujarati, and other Indian languages, clothed in extremely bad Hindustani grammar. Very naturally, the interpreter has

to argue with the witness before he can get at his meaning. While the process is going on, the Judge grows impatient, and thinks that the witness is prevaricating. The poor interpreter, if questioned, true to human nature, in order to conceal his defective knowledge of the language, says the witness does not give straight answers. The poor witness has no opportunity of setting himself right. In the case of the Gujarati speakers the matter is still more serious. There is not a single Gujarati interpreter in the Courts. The interpreter, after great difficulty, manages to get at the sense only of what the witness is speaking. I have myself seen the Gujarati-speaking witness struggling to make himself understood, and the interpreter struggling to understand the Gujarati Hindustani. Indeed, it speaks volumes for the acuteness of the interpreters in extracting even the sense from a forest of strange words. But all the while the struggle is going on, the Judge makes up his mind not to believe a word of what the witness says, and puts him down for a liar.

III

In order to answer the third question, "Is their present treatment in accordance with the best British traditions, or with the principles of justice and morality, or with the principles of Christianity?", it will be necessary to enquire what their treatment is. I think it will be readily granted that the Indian is bitterly hated in the Colony. The man in the street hates him, curses him, spits upon him, and often pushes him off the footpath. The Press cannot find a sufficiently strong word in the best English dictionary to damn him with. Here are a few samples : "The real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community"; "these parasites"; "wily, wretched, semi-barbarous Asiatics"; "a thing black and lean and a long way from clean, which they call the accursed Hindoo"; "he is chock-full of vice,

and he lives upon rice. . . . I heartily cuss the Hindoo"; "squalid coolies with truthless tongues and artful ways". The Press almost unanimously refuses to call the Indian by his proper name. He is "Ramsamy"; he is "Mr. Sammy"; he is "Mr. Coolie"; he is "the black man". And these offensive epithets have become so common that they (at any rate one of them, "coolie") are used even in the sacred precincts of the Courts, as if "the coolie" were the legal and proper name to give to any and every Indian. The public men, too, seem to use the word freely. I have often heard the painful expression "coolie clerk" from the mouths of men who ought to know better. The expression is a contradiction in terms and is extremely offensive to those to whom it is applied. But then, in this Colony the Indian is a creature without feelings!

The tramcars are not for the Indians. The railway officials may treat the Indians as beasts. No matter how clean, his very sight is such an offence to every White man in the Colony that he would object to sit, even for a short time, in the same compartment with the Indian. The hotels shut their doors against them. I know instances of respectable Indians having been denied a night's lodging in an hotel. Even the public baths are not for the Indians, no matter who they are.

If I am to depend upon one-tenth of the reports that I have received with regard to the treatment of the indentured Indians on the various estates, it would form a terrible indictment against the humanity of the masters on the estates and the care taken by the *Protector* of Indian immigrants. This, however, is a subject which my extremely limited experience of it precludes me from making further remarks upon.

The Vagrant Law is needlessly oppressive, and often puts respectable Indians in a very awkward position.

Add to this the rumours that are rife in the air, to the effect that they should be made, or induced, to live in

locations. It may be merely an intention; none the less, it is an index of the feeling of the European Colonists against the Indians. I beseech you to picture to yourself the state the Indian would be in in Natal if it were possible to carry out all such intentions.

Now, is this treatment in consonance with the British traditions of justice, or morality, or Christianity?

I would, with your permission, quote an extract from Macaulay, and leave it to you to answer the question as to whether the present treatment would have met with his approval. Speaking on the subject of the treatment of the Indians, he expressed the following sentiments:

> We shall never consent to administer the *pousta* to a whole community, to stupefy and paralyse a great people whom God has committed to our charge, for the wretched purpose of rendering them more amenable to our control. What is that power worth which is founded on vice, on ignorance, and on misery, which we can hold by violating the most sacred duties which as governors we owe to the governed, which as a people blessed with far more than an ordinary measure of political liberty and of intellectual light we owe to a race debased by three thousand years of despotism and priestcraft? *We are free, we are civilized, to little purpose, if we grudge to any portion of the human race an equal measure of freedom and civilization.*

I have but to refer you to writers like Mill, Burke, Bright, and Fawcett, to further show that they, at any rate, would not give countenance to the treatment accorded to the Indians in the Colony.

To bring a man here on starvation wages, to hold him under bondage, and when he shows the least signs of liberty, or, is in a position to live less miserably, to wish to send him back to his home where he would become comparatively a stranger and perhaps unable to earn a living, is hardly a mark of fair play or justice characteristic of the British nation.

That the treatment of the Indians is contrary to the teaching of Christianity needs hardly any argument. The Man, who taught us to love our enemies and to give our

cloak to the one who wanted the coat, and to hold out the right cheek when the left was smitten, and who swept away the distinction between the Jew and the Gentile, would never brook a disposition that causes a man to be so proud of himself as to consider himself polluted even by the touch of a fellow-being.

IV

The last head of the enquiry has, I believe, been sufficiently discussed in discussing the first. And I for one would not be much grieved if an experiment were tried to drive out each and every Indian from the Colony. In that case, I have not the slightest doubt that the Colonists would soon rue the day when they took the step and would wish they had not done it. The petty trades and the petty avocations of life would be left alone. The work for which they are specially suited would not be taken up by the Europeans, and the Colony would lose an immense amount of revenue now derived from the Indians. The climate of South Africa is not such as would enable the Europeans to do the work that they can easily do in Europe. What, however, I do submit with the greatest deference is this, that if the Indians must be kept in the Colony, then let them receive such treatment as by their ability and integrity they may be fit to receive — that is to say, give them what is their due, and what is the least that a sense of justice, unalloyed by partiality or prejudice, should prompt you to give them.

It now remains for me only to implore you to give this matter your earnest consideration, and to remind you (here I mean especially the English) that Providence has put the English and the Indians together, and has placed in the hands of the former the destinies of the latter, and it will largely depend upon what every Englishman does with respect to the Indian and how he treats him, whether the putting together will result in an everlasting union

brought about by broad sympathy, love, free mutual intercourse, and also a right knowledge of the Indian character, or whether the putting together will simply last so long as the English have sufficient resources to keep the Indians under check, and the naturally mild Indians have not been vexed into active opposition to the foreign yoke. I have, further, to remind you that the English in England have shown by their writings, speeches and deeds that they mean to unify the hearts of the two peoples, that they do not believe in colour distinctions, and that they will raise India with them rather than rise upon its ruin. In support of this I beg to refer you to Bright, Fawcett, Bradlaugh, Gladstone, Wedderburn, Pincott, Ripon, Reay, Northbrooke, Dufferin, and a host of other eminent Englishmen who represent public opinion. The very fact of an English constituency returning an Indian to the British House of Commons,[1] in spite of the expressed wish to the contrary of the then Prime Minister, and almost the whole British Press, both Conservative and Liberal, congratulating the Indian member on the success, and expressing its approval of the unique event, and the whole House again, both Conservative and Liberal, according him a warm welcome — this fact alone, I submit, supports my statement. Will you, then, follow them, or will you strike out a new path? Will you promote unity, "which is the condition of progress", or will you promote discord, "which is the condition of degradation"?

In conclusion, I beg of you to receive the above in the same spirit in which it has been written.

I have the honour to remain,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a pamphlet printed at the Natal Mercury Steam Printing Works, Durban.

[1] The reference is to Dadabhai Naoroji's election in 1893 from Central Finsbury.

43. LETTER TO EUROPEANS[1]

BEACH GROVE,
DURBAN,
December 19, 1894

SIR,

I venture to send you the enclosed for perusal, and solicit your opinion on the subject matter of the Open Letter.

Whether you be a clergyman, editor, public man, merchant or lawyer, the subject cannot but demand your attention. If you are a clergyman, inasmuch as you represent the teaching of Jesus, it must be your duty to see that you are in no way, directly or indirectly, countenancing a treatment of your fellow-beings that would not be pleasing to Jesus. If you are an editor of a newspaper, the responsibility is equally great. Whether you are using your influence as a journalist to the evolution or degradation of humanity will depend upon whether you are encouraging division among class and class or striving after union. The same remarks will apply to you as a public man. If you are a merchant or lawyer, you have, then too, a duty to discharge towards your customers and clients from whom you derive a considerable pecuniary advantage. It is for you to treat them as dogs or fellow-beings demanding your sympathy in the cruel persecution that they are put to owing to the prevalent ignorance about the Indians in the Colony. Coming as you do in comparatively close contact with them, you have, no doubt, the opportunity and incentive to study them. Looked at from a sympathetic standpoint, they would perhaps show themselves to you as they have been seen by scores and hundreds of Europeans who had the opportunity to study them, and who used it aright.

[1] A printed circular letter sent by Gandhiji to Europeans in Natal.

Your opinion is solicited with a view to ascertain if there are many Europeans in the Colony who would actively sympathize with and feel for the Indians in the Colony, assuming that their treatment is not all that could be desired.

I am, Sir,
your faithful servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya.

44. *INADEQUACY OF MATERIALISM*

M. K. GANDHI
AGENT FOR
THE ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION
& THE LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY

DURBAN,
January 21, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser

SIR,

You will oblige me by letting me draw the attention of your readers to the notice that appears in your advertisement columns about the Esoteric Christian Union and the London Vegetarian Society.

The system represented by the Union establishes the unity and common source of all the great religions of the world, and points out, as the books advertised will amply show, the utter inadequacy of materialism which boasts of having given the world a civilization which was never witnessed before, and which is alleged to have done the greatest good to humanity, all the while conveniently forgetting that its greatest achievements are the invention of the most terrible weapons of destruction, the awful

growth of anarchism, the frightful disputes between capital and labour, and the wanton and diabolical cruelty inflicted on innocent, dumb, living animals in the name of science, "falsely so called".

There seem to be, however, signs of reaction setting in—the almost phenomenal success of the Theosophical Society, the gradual acceptance by the clergy of the doctrine of holiness, and what is more, the acceptance by Professor Max Muller of the doctrine of reincarnation so conclusively demonstrated in *The Perfect Way*, his statement that it was gaining ground among the thinking minds in England and elsewhere, and the publication of *The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ*. It is not possible to secure these works in S. Africa. My knowledge of them is, therefore, confined to their reviews. All these and many such facts are, I submit, unmistakable signs of a return from the materialistic tendencies, which have made us so cruelly selfish, to the unadulterated esoteric teachings of not only Jesus Christ, but also of Buddha, Zoroaster and Mahomed, who are no longer so generally denounced by the civilized world as false prophets, but whose and Jesus's teachings are beginning to be acknowledged to be complementary of one another.

I regret that I am unable yet to advertise books on vegetarianism, as they have, by mistake, been forwarded to India, and will, therefore, take some time before they arrive in Durban. I may, however, state one valuable fact with regard to the efficacy of vegetarianism. There is no more potent instrument of evil than drunkenness, and I may be allowed to say that all those who suffer from the craving for drink, but would like really to be free from the curse, have only to give a trial for at least one month to a diet chiefly consisting of brown bread and oranges or grapes, to secure an entire freedom from the craving. I have myself carried on a series of experiments, and can testify that on a vegetarian diet, without any condiments and consisting of a liberal supply of juicy fresh fruits, I have lived com-

fortably, without tea, coffee, or cocoa, and even water, for days together. Hundreds in England have become vegetarian for this reason, and having once been inveterate tipplers, have now reached a stage when the very smell of grog or whisky is an offence to their tastes. Dr. B. W. Richardson, in his *Food for Man*, recommends pure vegetarianism as a cure for drunkenness. In a comparatively hot country like Natal, where there is a plentiful supply of fruits and vegetables, a bloodless diet should prove very beneficial in every way, apart from its immeasurable superiority to flesh foods, on grounds scientific, sanitary, economical, ethical, and spiritual.

It is, perhaps, needless to mention that the sale of E.C.U. books is not at all a money-making concern. In certain cases the books have even been given away. They will be gladly lent in some cases. I shall be very happy to correspond with any of your readers who may want any further information, either about the E.C.U. or the L.V.S., or to have a quiet chat on these (to me at any rate) momentous questions.

I would conclude with what Rev. John Pulsford, D.D., has to say with regard to the teaching of the E.C.U.:

> It is impossible for a spiritually intelligent reader to doubt that these teachings were received from within the astral veil. They are full of the concentrated and compact wisdom of the Holy Heavens, and of God. If the Christians knew their own religion, they would find in these priceless records Lord Christ and His vital process abundantly illustrated and confirmed. That such communications are possible, and are permitted to be given to the world, is a sign, and a most promising sign, of our age.

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 1-2-1895

45. *LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI*

328, SMITH STREET
DURBAN, NATAL
January 25, 1895

TO

DADABHAI NAOROJI, ESQ., M.P.
LONDON

SIR,

Though the Government is silent, the papers have been informing the public that the Franchise Bill has been disallowed by Her Majesty. Can you give us any information on the point?

The Indian settlers cannot thank you and the Congress Committee too much for the trouble taken on their behalf.

I remain,
Sir,
your faithful servant,
M. K. GANDHI

I venture to send the enclosed for perusal.

M. K. G.

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's own hand.

46. *BOOKS FOR SALE*

The following books by the late Dr. Anna Kingsford and Mr. Edward Maitland, introduced for the first time in South Africa, are offered for sale at their published prices:

The Perfect Way, 7/6
Clothed with the Sun, 7/6

The Story of the New Gospel of Interpretation, 3/6
Bible's Own Account of Itself, 1/-
The New Gospel of Interpretation, 1/-

"It is like listening to the utterances of God or archangel. I know of nothing in literature to equal it (*The Perfect Way*)." — *The late Sir F. H. Doyle*

"We regard *The Perfect Way* as the most illumined and useful book published in the nineteenth century."

—*Gnostic* (U.S.A)

M. K. GANDHI
AGENT FOR THE ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION AND THE LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY

The Natal Advertiser, 2-2-1895

47. MAHOMEDAN LAW

The following report appeared in The Natal Witness *of March 22, 1893:*

Mr Tatham applied to the Supreme Court yesterday for confirmation of the Master's report in the intestate estate of Hassan Dawjee, and remarked that a plan of distribution, prepared by Mr Gandhi, barrister, had been embodied in the report, and was framed according to Mahomedan Law.

Sir Walter Wragg[1]: The only thing about this is that Mr Gandhi knows nothing of Mahomedan Law. He is as great a stranger to Mahomedan Law as a Frenchman. For what he has stated he would have to go to a book as you would; of his own knowledge he knows nothing.

Mr Tatham said that a plan of distribution had been obtained from the priests and from Mr Gandhi. Where else they were to go he did not know. They had exhausted all the expert evidence available.

Sir Walter Wragg: The portion which Mr Gandhi states should go to the brother of the deceased, should, according to Mahome-

[1] A judge of the Supreme Court.

dan Law, go to the poor. Mr Gandhi is a Hindu and knows his own faith, of course, but he knows nothing of Mahomedan Law.

Mr Tatham : The question is whether we shall take Mr Gandhi's view or the priests'.

Sir Walter Wragg : You must take the priests'. When the brother can show that he represents the poor he will be entitled to 5/24ths, as stated by Mr Gandhi.

Commenting on this Gandhiji wrote as follows:

DURBAN,
March 23, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Witness

SIR,

I trust, in the interests of justice, you will allow me to make a few remarks on your report of the conversation that took place between Sir Walter Wragg and Mr. Tatham with regard to a point of Mahomedan Law, in your issue of the 22nd inst.

I have ventured to trespass upon your courtesy, not because I want to defend myself, but because of the decision of the Supreme Court, which, I believe, with all due respect to Sir Walter Wragg, is based upon an erroneous view of the Mahomedan Law, and would vitally affect a large portion of the Indian Colonists.

Were I a Mahomedan, I should be very sorry to be judged by a Mahomedan whose sole qualification is that he is born a Mahomedan. It is a revelation that the Mahomedans know the law intuitively, and that a non-Mahomedan never dare give an opinion on a point of Mahomedan Law.

The decision (if your report is correct) that the brother will be entitled to his 5/24ths only after he "can show that he represents the poor", is, I am afraid, according to

the Mahomedan Law administered in India and revealed in the Koran, subversive of that law. I have carefully gone through the chapters on "Inheritance" in Macnaghten's *Mahomedan Law* (which, by the way, is edited by a non-Mahomedan Indian, and which Messrs. Binns and Mason, in their report published after their return from India, say is the book considered to be one of the best on that law), and have also gone through that portion of the Koran which relates to the subject, and in them I find not one word with regard to the poor being entitled to any part of the inheritance of a deceased Moslem. If the Koran and the book above mentioned are any authority on that law, then not only is there no portion to which the poor are entitled in the case in question, but under no circumstances are the poor entitled to any part of an intestate estate. I hope to be able to show that the brother (it should really be the half-brother), when he takes anything under that law, takes it *in his own right*, and takes it *because* he is a *brother*.

It is likely that His Lordship, when he was talking about an inheritance, was actually but unconsciously thinking of almsgiving, which is incumbent upon every Mahomedan. It is one of their articles of faith. But the principle that guides almsgiving during life does not obtain in cases of distribution of inheritance. A Mahomedan, by giving alms during his lifetime, earns for himself heaven or a respectable place therein. Alms given out of his estate by the State after his death can surely do him no spiritual good, because it is not *his* act. After a Moslem's death it is the relatives who have a prior, nay exclusive, claim upon his estate.

Says the Koran:

> We have appointed unto every one kindred to inherit part of what their parents and relations shall leave after their deaths.

The law says:

> There belong to the property of a person deceased four successive

> duties; first, his funeral ceremony and burial without superfluity of expense, yet without deficiency; next the discharge of his just debts from the whole of his remaining effects; then the payment of his legacies out of a third of what remains after his debts are paid; and lastly, the distribution of the residue among his successors.

The successors are thus described:

> 1. legal sharers; 2. residuaries; 3. distant kindred; 4. successors by contract; 5. acknowledged kindred; 6. universal legatee; 7. Crown.

"Legal sharers" are defined as "all those persons for whom specific shares have been appointed or ordained in the sacred text, the traditions, or with general assent," and according to the table enumerating the 12 classes of sharers, include half-brothers also. "Residuaries" are "all persons for whom no share has been appointed, and who take the residue after the sharers have been satisfied, or the whole estate when there are no sharers". It should here be noted that some legal sharers are as such, under certain conditions, excluded, and then rank as residuaries. "Distant kindred" are "all relations who are neither sharers nor residuaries". "After the sharers are satisfied, if there remains a residue of the property left by the deceased, *it is to be divided among the next class of heirs called residuaries*. If there be no residuaries, the residue will revert to the sharers in proportion to their shares."

I would not occupy your valuable space by giving definitions of the other successors. Suffice it to say that they do not include the poor at all, and that they can "take" only after the first three classes are exhausted.

The residuaries in their own right include, among others, "the 'offspring' of the father of the deceased, i.e., brothers, consanguine brothers, and their sons, how low soever". Rule 12 of Section 1 says: "It is a general rule that a brother shall take double the share of a sister. The exception to it is in the case of brothers and sisters by the same mother only, but by different fathers." And Rule 25, Section 11, says: "Where there are daughters

or son's daughters and no *brothers*, the sisters take what remains after the daughters or son's daughters have realized their shares, such residue being half should there be only one daughter or son's daughter, and one-third should there be two or more." The two rules read together help us materially to determine the share the brother gets in the case in point.

In the typical examples given in the book I have been quoting from, I find the following with its solution: "*Example 7.* Husband, daughter, brother, and three sisters." The solution need not be given fully. The brother as a residuary *in his own right* gets 2/20ths.

It will then be seen from the above that brothers, and in their absence, half-brothers, rank either as sharers or residuaries in their own right, and, therefore, with the greatest deference to Sir Walter's opinion in the case in question, the brother "takes", if he does at all, *in his own right and not as representing the poor*, and if he does not "take" (a thing that cannot happen in such a case if the law is to be respected), the residue "reverts" to the sharers.

But the report says that the priest and I differ. If you eliminate the "I" and put "the law" instead (for I simply said what the law was), I would venture to say, the priest and the law should never differ, and if they do, it is the priest and not the law that goes to the wall. In this case, however, the priest and I do not differ if the distribution in the report sent to me by Mr. Tatham was the one approved by the priest, as it seems to have been, according to his letter of advice. The priest says not a word about the half-brother taking as representing the poor.

Lastly, after I saw the report, I saw purposely some Mahomedan gentlemen who ought to know the law according to Sir Walter, and they were surprised when I told them about the decision. They, without even taking

time to consider—the thing appeared to them so plain and clear—said, "The poor never take anything from an intestate estate. The half-brother *as such* should have his share."

The decision then, I submit, is contrary to the Mahomedan Law, the priest's opinion, and other Mahomedan gentlemen. It will be a manifest hardship if the portions rightly belonging to the relations of a deceased Mahomedan are to be locked up until they can show that "they represent the poor"—a condition never contemplated by the law or sanctioned by Mahomedan usage.

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Witness, 28-3-1895

48. MEMORIAL TO AGENT, PRETORIA

PRETORIA,
April 16, 1895

TO

HIS HONOUR,
SIR JACOBUS DE WET, K.C.M.G.,
HER MAJESTY'S AGENT, PRETORIA

THE MEMORIAL OF TAYOB KHAN AND ABDOOL GANI OF PRETORIA AND HAJEE HABIB HAJEE DADA OF JOHANNESBURG WHO ACT AS A COMMITTEE ON BEHALF OF THE BRITISH INDIAN MERCHANTS IN THIS REPUBLIC

We respectfully request Your Honour to place yourself in communication with His Excellency the High Commissioner, in order to ascertain whether Her Majesty's Government will be satisfied with the Award given by the Arbitrator in the recent arbitration held at Bloemfontein in the Orange Free State, between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the South African Republic, on the Indian Question. As Your Honour is

aware, the Arbitrator has decided that Law 3 of 1885, as amended by Volksraad's Besluit of 1886, must be enforced by this Government, and that in the event of any dispute or difference as to the interpretation of that law, the High Court of this Republic must decide such difference.

In one of the Green books, No. 21894, pages 31 and 35, put in at the above-mentioned arbitration by the Government of this Republic, statements are made to the effect that His Honour the Chief Justice, in giving judgement in a certain application before the High Court by Ismael Suliman and Co., held that no difference could be made between places where business is carried on or where Indians reside. In view of these facts, we respectfully submit, without in any way impugning the High Court, that it would be a foregone conclusion, if the statements referred to above as to the judgement of the Chief Justice be correct, that the judgement of the Court in any case submitted to it under the above quoted law would be against the Indian subjects of Her Mejesty in this Republic. As, therefore, the Arbitrator did not decide the question submitted to him in terms of the Deed of Submission, but practically left it to the decision of the High Court of this Republic, we would respectfully submit that the Arbitrator did not decide the question in terms of the reference to him. We, therefore, respectfully request Your Honour to communicate with Her Majesty's Government and ascertain whether they will be satisfied with the above Award and acquiesce therein.

Sd. Tayob Hajee Khan Mohamed
Abdool Gani
Hajee Habib Hajee Dada

Eeclosure in Despatch No. 204 of 29 April, 1895 from H. M's. High Commissioner to the South African Republic to the Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Colonial Office Records No. 417, Vol. 148.

49. PETITION TO NATAL ASSEMBLY[1]

[DURBAN,
Prior to *May 5, 1895*]

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE COLONY OF NATAL

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That your Petitioners, as representing the Indians in this Colony, hereby respectfully approach your Honourable Assembly with regard to the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill now before you for consideration.

Your Petitioners respectfully submit that so much of the Bill which provides for re-indenture and imposition of a tax in default of re-indenture, is manifestly unjust, entirely uncalled for, and in direct opposition to the fundamental principles upon which the British Constitution is based.

That the Bill is manifestly unjust it does not need, your Petitioners submit, many words to prove. To raise the maximum term of indenture from five years to an indefinite period is in itself unjust, because it puts in the way of the masters of the indentured Indians greater temptations to oppression or harshness. No matter how humane the masters may be in the Colony, they will always remain human. And your Petitioners need hardly point out what human nature is when selfish considerations

[1] The petition was published in *The Natal Advertiser* on May 5, 1895.

guide one's actions. Moreover, the Bill, your Petitioners venture to say, is an absolutely one-sided arrangement, for, while it shows every consideration to the employer, it gives practically nothing in return to the employee.

The Bill is, your Petitioners submit, uncalled for because no reasons exist for its introduction. It is not meant to help the Colony out of a pecuniary crash or help forward any industry. On the other hand, it was because it was recognised that the industries, for which the Indian labour was specially required, no longer required any extraordinary aid that the £10,000 vote was abolished only last year. It is then evident that there is no real need for such legislation.

To show that the Bill is in direct opposition to the fundamental principles of the British Constitution, your Petitioners humbly refer your Honourable Assembly to the whole course of the great events during the last century in which Britain has played a prominent part. Forced labour, from the grossest form of slavery to the mildest form of *veth*, has always been repugnant to the British traditions, and has everywhere, so far as practical, been abolished. Indentured labour exists in Assam as it does in this Colony. It was only a short time ago when it was admitted by Her Majesty's Government, in reference to such labour in that country, that the indentured labour was an evil to be countenanced only as long as it was absolutely necessary to support or promote an important industry, and to be removed at the first suitable opportunity. Your Petitioners respectfully submit that the Bill under consideration violates the above principle.

If the proposed extension of the term of indenture is thus (your Petitioners hope they have shown to your Honourable Assembly's satisfaction) unjust, uncalled for, and opposed to the fundamental principles of the British Constitution, the proposed imposition of a tax is more

so. It has long been acknowledged as an axiomatic truth that taxation is meant only for the purposes of revenue. It will not for a moment be said, your Petitioners humbly think, that the proposed tax is meant for any such purpose. The proposed taxation is avowedly meant to drive the Indian out of the Colony after he has finished his indenture. It will, therefore, be a prohibitive tax, and conflict with the principles of Free Trade.

It will moreover inflict, your Petitioners fear, an unwarranted wrong on the indentured Indians, because for an indentured Indian, who has severed all connection with India and come down to the Colony with his family, to go back and hope to earn a livelihood is almost an utter impossibility. Your Petitioners crave leave to mention from their own experience that, as a rule, it is only those Indians who cannot find work to keep body and soul together in India who come to the Colony under indenture. The very fabric of the Indian society is such that the Indian, in the first place, does not leave his home, and when once he is driven to do so, it is hopeless for him to return to India and expect to earn bread, much less to make a fortune.

It is an admitted fact that the Indian labour is indispensable to the prosperity of the Colony. If so, your Petitioners submit that the indentured Indians, who so materially help forward the prosperity of the Colony, are entitled to better consideration.

It need hardly be mentioned that the Bill is a piece of class legislation and that it accentuates and encourages the prejudice that exists against Indians in the Colony, and thus would widen the gulf between one class of British subjects and another. Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that your Honourable Assembly will come to the conclusion that that portion of the Bill which

contemplates re-indenture and the imposition of a tax in default of re-indenture is not such as could be considered favourably by your Honourable Assembly, and for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners shall for ever pray, &c. &c.

(SD.) ABDULLA HAJI ADAM
AND SEVERAL OTHERS

From a photostat of a printed copy.

50. *LETTER TO CAMROODEEN*

P. O. BOX 66
DURBAN, NATAL,
May 5, 1895

DEAR MR. MAHOMED KASIM CAMROODEEN,

I have received from you the signatures of the Indians. I hope you have obtained those from the Dutch and sent them to Pretoria. There should be no delay in this, as the work is very urgent. I have wired to Pretoria also to send a copy of the Dutch petition[1] there. All this should be completed by Wednesday. Please write to me in detail as to what you have done.

It is very necessary that every Indian should exert himself to the utmost in this work. Otherwise we shall have to repent.

Yours sincerely,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

Translated from a photostat copy of a Gujarati letter in Gandhiji's own hand.

[1] *Vide* p. 197, *infra*.

51. A BAND OF VEGETARIAN MISSIONARIES

It was in England that I read in Mrs. Anna Kingsford's *Perfect Way in Diet* that there was a colony of Trappists[1] in South Africa who were Vegetarians. Ever since that I had wished to see these Vegetarians. The wish has at last been realized.

At the outset, I may remark that South Africa, and particularly Natal, is especially adapted for Vegetarians. The Indians have made Natal the Garden Colony of South Africa. One can grow almost anything on the South African soil, and that in abundance. The supply of bananas, pineapples and oranges is almost inexhaustible, and far greater than the demand. There is no wonder that the Vegetarians can thrive very well in Natal. The only wonder is, that in spite of such facilities and the warm climate, there should be so few Vegetarians. The result is that large tracts of land still remain neglected and uncultivated. The staple articles of food are imported when it is perfectly possible to grow all of them in South Africa; and in a vast territory like Natal, there is much distress among a small population of 40,000 Whites. All this, because they will not take to agricultural pursuits.

Another curious but painful result of the unnatural mode of living is that there is a very strong prejudice against the Indian population who also number 40,000. The Indians, being Vegetarians, take to agriculture without any difficulty whatsoever. Naturally, therefore, all over the Colony, the small farms are owned by Indians, whose keen competition gives offence to the White population. They are following a dog-in-the-manger and suicidal policy in so behaving. They would rather leave the vast

[1] Monks of the Cistercian order noted for silence and other austerities.

agricultural resources in the country undeveloped, than have the Indians to develop them. Owing to such stolidity and shortsightedness, a Colony that can easily support double, or even treble, the number of European and Indian inhabitants, with difficulty supports 80,000 Europeans and Indians. The Transvaal Government have gone so far in their prejudice, that the whole of the Republic, although the soil is very fruitful, remains a desert of dust. And if the gold mines could not be worked from any cause, thousands of men would be thrown out of employment and literally starved to death. Is there not here a great lesson to be learnt? The flesh-eating habits have really tended to retard the progress of the community, and, indirectly, to create division among the two great communities which ought to be united and work hand in hand. There is also this striking fact to be noticed that the Indians enjoy as good a health as the Europeans in the Colony, and I know that many doctors would be simply starving if there were no Europeans, or their flesh-pots, and that by their thrifty and temperate habits, both attributable to Vegetarianism, Indians can successfully compete with Europeans. Of course, it should be understood that the Indians in the Colony are not pure Vegetarians. They are practically so.

We shall see presently how the Trappists of Mariann Hill, near Pinetown, are a standing testimony to the truth of the above remarks.

Pinetown is a little village, situated at a distance of 16 miles by rail from Durban. It is about 1,100 feet above the sea level, and enjoys a beautiful climate.

The Trappist monastery is about three miles distant from Pinetown. My companion and I walked to Mariann Hill, as the hill, or rather the cluster of hills, on which the Abbey is situated is called. It is a very pleasant walk through the little hills all covered with green grass.

On our reaching the settlement, we saw a gentleman

with a pipe in his mouth, and we at once knew that he was not one of the brotherhood. He, however, took us to the visitors' room, where a visitors' book was kept. It appeared from the book that it commenced from 1894, and there were hardly twenty pages filled up. Indeed, the mission is not at all known as it ought to be.

One of the brotherhood came up and bowed very low. We were offered tamarind water and pineapples. After having refreshed ourselves, we accompanied the guide to the various places he took us to. The various buildings one saw were all substantial red-brick buildings. All was quiet; the silence was broken only by the noise of the instruments in the workshops or the native children.

The settlement is a quiet little model village, owned on the truest republican principles. The principle of liberty, equality and fraternity is carried out in its entirety. Every man is a brother, every woman a sister. The monks number about 120 on the settlement, and the nuns, or the sisters as they are called, number about 60. The sisters' cloister is about half a mile from the brothers'! Both the brothers and the sisters observe a strict vow of silence and of chastity. No brother or sister may speak except those who are allowed to by the Abbot, who is the head of the Trappists in Natal. And those are only allowed to speak who have to go to town to make purchases or to look after visitors.

The brothers are dressed in long robes with a black piece of cloth in front and on the back. The sisters wear red clothing of the simplest style. None seemed to wear socks.

A candidate for the brotherhood has to make a vow for two years and, till then, is called a novice. After two years, he may either leave the cloister or make a vow for life. A model Trappist gets up at 2 a.m. and devotes four hours to prayer and contemplation. At six, he has his breakfast, which consists of bread and coffee, or some such simple

foods. He dines at twelve, and makes a meal of bread and soup, and fruits. He sups at six in the evening and goes to bed at 7 or 8 p.m. The brothers eat no fish, flesh or fowl. They discard even eggs. They take milk, but in Natal we were told they could not get it cheap. The sisters are allowed meat four days in the week. Asked why they put up with such an anomaly, the obliging guide said, "Because the sisters are more delicate than the brothers." Neither my companion, who is almost a Vegetarian, nor I, could see the force or logic of the reasoning. Certainly, both of us were very much grieved to hear the news which was a surprise to us, for we expected both the brothers and the sisters to be Vegetarians.

They take no intoxicating liquors except under medical advice. None may keep money for private use. All are equally rich or poor.

We saw no wardrobes, chests of drawers, or portmanteaus, although we were allowed to see every inch of the place. They may not leave the limits of the settlement, except those who are permitted to do so on business. They may not read newspapers and books that are not religious. They may not read any religious books but only those that are allowed. It is this hard austere life that caused our friend with the pipe in his mouth, whom we first met, to remark in reply to a question whether he was a Trappist—"No fear, I am anything but a Trappist." And yet the good brothers and sisters did not seem to consider their lives to have fallen on hard places.

A Protestant clergyman said to his audience that the Roman Catholics are weakly, sickly and sad. Well, if the Trappists are any criterion of what a Catholic is, they are, on the contrary, healthy and cheerful. Wherever we went, a beaming smile and a lowly bow greeted us, whether we saw a brother or a sister. Even while the guide was descanting on the system he prized so much, he did not at all seem to consider the self-chosen discipline a hard yoke to

bear. A better instance of undying faith and perfect, implicit obedience could not well be found anywhere else.

If their repast is the simplest possible, their dining tables and bedrooms are no less so.

The former are made, on the settlement, of wood, without any varnish. They use no tablecloths. The knives and spoons are the cheapest to be had in Durban. Instead of glass-ware they use enamelled things.

For bedrooms they have a large hall (but none too large for the inmates) which contains about 80 beds. Every available space is utilized for the beds.

In the native quarters they seem to have overdone it in point of beds. As soon as we entered the sleeping hall for natives, we noticed the closeness and the stuffy air. The beds are all joined together, separated by only single boards. There was hardly space enough to walk.

They believe in no colour distinctions. These natives are accorded the same treatment as the Whites. They are mostly children. They get the same food as the brothers, and are dressed as well as they themselves are. While it is generally said, not without some truth, that the Christian Kaffir is a failure, everyone, even the wildest sceptic, admits that the mission of the Trappists has proved the most successful in point of turning out really good Christian natives. While the mission schools of other denominations very often enable the natives to contract all the terrible vices of the western civilization, and very rarely produce any moral effect on them, the natives of the Trappist mission are patterns of simplicity, virtue and gentleness. It was a treat to see them saluting passers-by in a humble yet dignified manner.

There are about 1,200 natives on the mission, including children and adults. They have all exchanged a life of sloth, indolence and superstition, for one of industry, usefulness and devotion to one Supreme God.

On the settlement there are various workshops—black-

smiths', tinsmiths', carpenters', shoemakers', tanners' etc., where the natives are taught all these useful industries, in addition to the English and the Zulu languages. Here it may be remarked that it speaks volumes for the high-mindedness of the noble settlers that, although almost all of them are Germans, they never attempt to teach the natives German; all these natives work side by side with the Whites.

At the sisters' cloisters, they have the ironing, sewing, straw-hat manufacturing and knitting departments, where one can see the native girls, dressed in clean costumes, working assiduously.

About two miles from the Abbey is situated the printing department, and the flour mill worked by a waterfall. It is a huge pile of building. There is also an oil machine, which is worked for pressing the oil from monkey nuts. It is needless to mention that the above-mentioned workshops supply the settlers with most of their requirements.

They grow many kinds of tropical fruits on the farm and the settlement is almost self-supporting.

They love and respect, and are in turn loved and respected by, the natives living in their neighbourhood who, as a rule, supply them with the converts.

The most prominent feature of the settlement is that you see religion everywhere. Every room has a Cross and, on the entrance a small receptacle for holy water which every inmate reverently applies to his eyelids, the forehead and the chest. Even the quick walk to the flour mill is not without some reminder of the Cross. It is a lovely footpath. On one side, you have a magnificent valley through which runs a small rivulet which murmurs the sweetest music, and on the other, little rocks whereon are carved the various inscriptions reminding you of the scenes of the Calvary. The valley is wholly covered with a green carpet of vegetation, studded with beautiful trees here and there. A lovelier walk, or a lovelier scenery, could not be well imagined. The inscrip-

tions carved in such a place cannot fail to produce a grand effect upon the mind. They are carved at such regular intervals that no sooner has one completed his thoughts on one inscription than another meets one's gaze.

The walk thus forms a continuous exercise for calm contemplation, unmarred by any other thoughts, or outside noise and bustle. Some of the inscriptions are: "Jesus falls a first time"; "Jesus falls a second time"; "Simon carries the Cross"; "Jesus is nailed to the Cross"; "Jesus is laid in his mother's lap", etc. etc.

Of course, the natives too are chiefly Vegetarians. Although they are not prohibited from taking flesh or meat, they are not supplied with any on the settlement.

There are about twelve such settlements in South Africa, most of which are in Natal. There are in all about 300 monks and about 120 nuns.

Such are our Vegetarians in Natal. Though they do not make of Vegetarianism a creed, though they base it simply on the ground that a Vegetarian diet helps them to crucify the flesh better, and though, perhaps, they are not even aware of the existence of the Vegetarian societies, and would not even care to read any Vegetarian literature, where is the Vegetarian who would not be proud of this noble band, even a casual intercourse with whom fills one with a spirit of love, charity and self-sacrifice, and who are a living testimony to the triumph of Vegetarianism from a spiritual point of view? I know from personal experience that a visit to the farm is worth a voyage from London to Natal. It cannot but produce a lasting holy impression on the mind. No matter whether one is a Protestant, a Christian or a Buddhist or what not, one cannot help exclaiming, after a visit to the farm, "If this is Roman Catholicism, everything said against it is a lie." It proves conclusively, to my mind, that a religion appears divine or devilish, according as its professors choose to make it appear.

The Vegetarian, 18-5-1895

52. PETITION TO LORD RIPON

PRETORIA, S.A.R.,
[*May, 1895*][1]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE MARQUIS OF RIPON, HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES, LONDON

THE PETITION OF THE BRITISH INDIANS RESIDING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Petitioners respectfully venture to approach Your Excellency in connection with their position in the S. A. R., especially as affected by the award lately given by the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State in the Indian Arbitration Case.

2. Your Petitioners, whether as traders, shopkeepers' assistants, hawkers, cooks, waiters, or labourers, are scattered over the whole of the Transvaal, though the greatest number is settled in Johannesburg and Pretoria. Of traders there are nearly 200 whose liquidated assets would amount to nearly £100,000. Of these about three firms import goods directly from England, Durban, Port Elizabeth, India, and other places, and have thus branches in other parts of the world whose existence mainly depends upon their Transvaal businesses. The rest are small vendors having stores in different places. There are nearly 2,000 hawkers in the Republic who buy goods and hawk them about, while those of your Petitioners who are labourers

[1] The petition was submitted some time after May 14 (*vide p.* 198). It was forwarded by Sir Jacobus de Wet to the High Commissioner at Cape Town on May 30, 1895.

are employed as general servants in European houses or hotels. They number about 1,500 men, of whom about 1,000 live at Johannesburg.

3. Your Excellency's Petitioners, before entering into a discussion of their precarious position in the State, would with the greatest deference venture to point out that your Petitioners, whose interests were at stake, were never once consulted as to the arbitration, that the moment the question of arbitration was broached, your Petitioners protested both against the principle of arbitration as against the choice of the Arbitrator. Your Petitioners conveyed the protest verbally to His Honour the British Agent at Pretoria, who, your Petitioners here take the opportunity to say, has always been most courteous and attentive to those of your Petitioners who had occasion to wait upon him from time to time in connection with the grievances of the Indians in the Transvaal. Your Petitioners would also draw Your Excellency's attention to the fact that even a written protest was sent to Her Majesty's High Commissioner at Cape Town. However, your Petitioners by dwelling upon the matter do not at all wish to cast the slightest reflection on the highmindedness or probity of the learned Chief Justice of the Orange Free State or to question the wisdom of Her Majesty's Officers. Having known the bias of the learned Chief Justice against the Indians, your Petitioners thought, and still humbly venture to think, that he could not, in spite of his most strenuous efforts to do otherwise, bring to bear upon the question an equi-balanced judgment which is so necessary to a right and proper perception of the facts of a case. Judges having a previous knowledge of cases have been known to refrain from deciding them, lest they should unconsciously be led away by preconceived notions or prejudices.

4. The reference to the learned Arbitrator in the case submitted on behalf of Her Majesty's Government runs thus:

The Arbitrator shall be free to decide either in favour of the claims put forward by Her Majesty's Government or by the South African Republic, or to lay down such interpretation of the said Ordinances, read together with the Despatches referring to the question, as shall appear to him to be correct.

5. The award as published in the papers is as follows:

(a) The claims of Her Majesty's Government and of the Government of the South African Republic respectively are disallowed, save and except to the extent and degree following, that is to say:

(b) The South African Republic is bound and entitled in its treatment of Indian and other Asiatic traders, being British subjects, to give full force and effect to Law No. 3 of 1885, enacted, and in the year 1886 amended by the Volksraad of the South African Republic, subject (in case of objections being raised by or on behalf of any such persons to any such treatment as not being in accordance with the provisions of the said law as amended) to sole and exclusive interpretation in the ordinary course by the Tribunals of the country.

6. Now, your Petitioners humbly submit that the above award not being in terms of the reference is void, and that Her Majesty's Government is not, therefore, bound by it. The very object with which the arbitration was decided upon is, it is respectfully pointed out, frustrated. The reference leaves it to the Arbitrator *either* to allow the claims of one of the two Governments *or* to lay down such interpretation of the ordinances as may appear to him to be correct, regard being had to the Despatches referring to the question. Instead of interpreting, the learned Arbitrator has delegated the interpretation, and in delegating has, moreover, limited the delegation to such persons as, by the very nature of their position, cannot possibly avail themselves of the procedure and evidence that could be availed of, nay that was expressly stipulated to be availed of, by the Arbitrator, and that

would tend to enable them to lay down such an interpretation as would be just and equitable, though, perhaps, not strictly legal.

7. The award, your Petitioners submit, is invalid on two grounds. First, because the Arbitrator had delegated his function, which no arbitrator in the world can do. Secondly, the Arbitrator has failed to keep to the reference, inasmuch as he has left undecided the question that he was expressly called upon to decide.

8. The object, it would seem, was *not* to have the question of interpretation decided in a law court, but to terminate the question once for all. Had not such been the case, Her Majesty's Government would never have entered into the voluminous correspondence with regard to the question of interpretation as found in the Transvaal Green books, Nos. 1 and 2, 1894. The question that was to be, and your Petitioners submit can only be, decided diplomatically and politically has been left, if the award is to be valid, to be decided judicially only. And if it is true that the Chief Justice of the Transvaal has already expressed his opinion in the case presented on behalf of the Transvaal Government, the decision of the question is almost a foregone conclusion. To prove that this is so, your Petitioners refer Your Excellency to newspapers of current dates, especially *The Johannesburg Times* of 27th April, 1895, (Weekly edition).

9. But your Petitioners' appeal to Your Excellency is on higher and broader grounds; your Petitioners have every confidence that the question that affects thousands of Her Majesty's subjects, on a proper solution of which depend the bread and butter of hundreds of British subjects, and a technical solution of which may bring ruin to hundreds of homes and may leave them penniless, will not be left to be decided merely in a court of law, where everybody's hands are tied down, and where such considerations find no place. So far as the traders are concerned, if the contention of the Transvaal Government is ultimately upheld, it means

absolute ruin to them, and not only to them personally, but to their families and relations and servants, both in India and the Transvaal, who are dependent upon them. It is impossible for some of your Petitioners, who have been trading for a long time in the Transvaal, to seek "pastures new" and manage to keep body and soul together, if they are driven out of their present position through no fault of their own, but merely, as will be seen presently, because of the misrepresentation of a few interested persons.

10. The gravity of the question and the immense interests that are at stake are your Petitioners' excuse for the following somewhat lengthy resume of their position, and for humbly soliciting Your Excellency's undivided attention to it.

11. The unfortunate departure from the 14th Clause of the Convention of 1881, which protects *equally* the interests of *all* persons *other* than *natives*, has originated and been countenanced, in and by the assumption that the Indian settlers in the Transvaal do not observe proper sanitation and is based on the misrepresentations of certain interested persons. It has been emphatically laid down by Her Majesty's Government throughout the correspondence about the Law 3 of 1885, that separate streets might be set apart for the Indians in the interests of public health, but that they cannot be compelled to trade in certain fixed parts only of the towns. After the Law 3 of 1885 was strenuously opposed for some time, the then High Commissioner, Sir H. Robinson, in withdrawing opposition to the amended Law of 1886, says in his letter (26th September, 1886, page 46, Green book No. 1, 1894): "Although the amended law is still a contravention of the 14th Article of the Convention of London, I shall not advise Her Majesty's Government to offer further opposition to it in view of Your Honour's opinion that it is necessary for the *protection of the public health*." Even the reference to the Arbitrator and the Law 3 of 1885 shows clearly that the departure from the Convention was to be assented to only for sanitary reasons.

12. Your Petitioners hereby enter their most respectful, but emphatic protest against the assumption that there exist sanitary reasons for such a departure; your Petitioners hope to be able to show that no such reasons exist.

13. Your Petitioners append hereto three certificates from doctors which would speak for themselves and which show that their dwellings are in no way inferior to those of the Europeans, from a sanitary point of view. (App. A, B, C.) Your Petitioners challenge comparison of their own dwellings with those of the Europeans who have theirs in their immediate neighbourhood. For, it so happens in Pretoria that, side by side with some of your Petitioners' houses and stores, are situated also the houses and stores of Europeans.

14. The following unsolicited testimonial will speak for itself. On the 16th October, 1885, Mr. Michell, the then Joint General Manager of the Standard Bank, writes thus to the High Commissioner, Sir H. Robinson:

> It may not be deemed out of place if I add that they (the Indian traders) are, within my knowledge, in all respects orderly, industrious and respectable people, and some among them are merchants of wealth and position, having establishments on a large scale in Mauritius, Bombay, and elsewhere. (Green book 1, *p*.37.)

15. About 35 European firms of repute

> distinctly declare that the aforementioned Indian merchants, the majority of whom come from Bombay, keep their business places, as well as their residences in a clean and proper sanitary state, in fact, just as good as the Europeans. (App. D.)

16. It is true, however, that this does not appear in the newspapers. The public Press thinks that your Petitioners are "filthy vermin". The representations to the Volksraad say the same thing. The reasons are obvious. Your Petitioners, not knowing the English language so well as to be able to take part in such discussions, or even to keep themselves informed of all the misrepresentations about them, are not always in a position to refute such statements. It was only when they became aware that their very existence was at stake that they went to the European firms and doctors

to give their opinion about their sanitary habits.

17. But your Petitioners claim also a right to speak for themselves, and they have no hesitation in stating deliberately that collectively, though their dwellings may appear uncouth, and are certainly without much adornment, they are in no way inferior to the European dwellings from a sanitary point of view. And as to their personal habits, they confidently assert that they use more water and bathe much oftener than the Europeans residing in the Transvaal whom they come in frequent connection with. Nothing can be further from your Petitioners' wish than to set up comparisons, or to try to show themselves superior to their European brethren. Force of circumstances only has driven them to such a course.

18. The two elegant petitions at pp. 19-21 of the Green book No. 2, which pray for an exclusion of all Asiatics, and contain wholesale denunciation of all the Asiatics, Chinamen &c., render it absolutely necessary to state what has been stated above. The first petition enumerates terrible vices, peculiar, as alleged therein, to Chinamen, and the second, referring to the first, includes in the denunciaion all the Asiatics. Speaking specifically of Chinese, Coolies and other Asiatics, the second petition refers to "the dangers to which the whole community is exposed by the spread of leprosy, syphilis, and the like loathsome diseases engendered by the filthy habits and immoral practices of these people".

19. Without entering into further comparison, and without entering into the question as affecting the Chinamen, your Petitioners most emphatically state that the above charges are entirely without grounds so far as your Petitioners are concerned.

20. To show how far the interested agitators have gone, your Petitioners quote below an excerpt from a memorial presented to the Volksraad of the Orange Free State, a copy of which was sent with approval by the Pretoria Chamber of Commerce to the Transvaal Government:

As these men enter the State without wives or female relatives the result is obvious. Their religion teaches them to consider all women as soulless and Christians as natural prey. (Green book No. 1, 1894, p. 30)

21. Your Petitioners ask, can there be a grosser libel on the great faiths prevailing in India or a greater insult to the Indian nation?

22. Such are the statements which, it will be noticed from the Green books referred to, have been used to make out a case against the Indians.

23. The real and the only reason has all along been suppressed. The only reason for compelling your Petitioners [to live in locations] or putting every obstacle in the way of your Petitioners earning a decent livelihood is the trade jealousy. Your Petitioners, i.e., those who are traders—and the whole crusade is practically against them—have, by their competition and owing to their temperate and thrifty habits, been able to reduce the prices of the necessaries of life. This does not suit the European traders who would make very large profits. It is a notorious fact that your Petitioners, who are traders, are almost without exception teetotallers. Their habits are simple and thus they are content to make small profits. This and this only is the reason of the opposition against them, and this is well known to everybody in South Africa. That this is so can be gathered from the public Press of South Africa, which sometimes becomes frank and shows the hatred in its true light. Thus, dealing with the 'coolie question', as it is contemptuously called, after showing that the real "coolie" is indispensable to South Africa, *The Natal Advertiser*, of the 15th September, 1893, thus delivers itself:

The sooner the steps are taken to suppress, and if possible to compel, the Indian trader the better. These latter are the real canker that is eating into the very vitals of the community.

24. Again, the *Press*, the Government organ in the Transvaal, dealing with this question, says: "If the Asiatic

invasion is not stopped in time, European shopkeepers must be driven to the wall, as they have been in Natal, and in many parts of the Cape Colony." The whole of the above article is interesting reading, and is a fair sample of the feeling of the Europeans towards colour in South Africa. Although the whole tenor of it betrays fear on the grounds of competition, there occurs this characteristic passage:

> If we are to be swamped by these people, trade by Europeans will be impossible, and we shall one and all become subjected to the horrible danger inseparable from close contact with a large body of uncleanly citizens, with whom syphilis and leprosy are common diseases, and hideous immorality a matter of course.

25. And yet Dr. Veal, in the certificate attached hereto, gives it as his deliberate opinion that "the lowest class Indian lives better and in better habitation, and with more regard to sanitary measures, than the lowest class White." (App. A)

26. Furthermore, the doctor puts on record that while "every nationality had one or more of its members at some time in the *lazaretto*, there was not a single Indian attached." Added to this is the testimony of the two doctors from Johannesburg, to the effect "that the Indians are in no way inferior to the Europeans of the same standing." (App. B and C)

27. In further proof of your Petitioners' contention, your Petitioners would take the liberty to quote from a leading article from the *Cape Times*, of 13th April, 1889, which states the case for the Indians as fairly as could be wished:

> The outcry which was raised in the Capital of the Transvaal against the 'Coolie trader' some little time ago, is brought to the mind by occasional paragraphs in the morning papers, regarding the doings of the Indian and the Arab traders.

After quoting a flattering description of the Indian enterprise from another newspaper, the article goes on to say:

> In face of such reminders as these, one may reasonably expect

to be pardoned for referring, for a few moments, to a body of respectable, hard-working men whose position is so misunderstood that their very nationality is overlooked and a name labelled to them, which tends to place them in an exceedingly low level in the estimation of their fellow-creatures. In the face, too, of financial operations, the success of which many of their detractors would envy, one fails to understand the agitation which would place the operators in the same category as the half-heathen Native and confine him to locations, and subject him to the harsher laws by which the Transvaal Kaffir is governed. The impression, which is but too prevalent both in the Transvaal and in this Colony, that the quiet and inoffensive Arab shopkeeper, and the equally harmless Indian, who carries his pack of dainty wares from house to house, is a Coolie, is due largely to an insolent ignorance as to the race whence they spring. When one reflects that the conception of Brahminism, with its poetic and mysterious mythology, took its rise in the land of the "Coolie trader", that in that land 24 centuries ago, the almost divine Buddha taught and practised the glorious doctrine of self-sacrifice, and that it was from the plains and mountains of that weird old country that we have derived the fundamental truths of the very language we speak, one cannot but help regretting that the children of such a race should be treated as equals of the children of black heathendom and outer darkness. Those who, for a few moments, have stayed to converse with the Indian trader have been, perhaps, surprised to find they are speaking to a scholar and a gentleman. . . . And it is the sons of this land of light who are despised as Coolies, and treated as Kaffirs.

It is about time that those who cry out against the Indian merchant should have pointed out to them, who and what he is. Many of his worst detractors are British subjects enjoying all the privileges and rights of membership in a glorious community. To them the hatred of injustice, and the love of fair play is inherent, and when it affects themselves, they have a method of insisting upon their rights and liberties, whether under a foreign government or under their own. Possibly, it has never struck them that the Indian merchant is also a British subject, and claims the same liberties and rights with equal justice. To say the very least of it, if we may be permitted to employ a phrase of Palmerston's days, it is very un-English to claim rights one would not allow to others. The right of trade as an equal privilege has, since the abolition of the Elizabethan monopolies, become almost a part

of the English Constitution, and were anyone to interfere with that right, the privilege of British citizenship would suddenly come to the front. That the Indian is more successful in competition and lives on less than the English merchant, is the unfairest and weakest of arguments. The very foundation of English Commerce lies in the fact of our being able to compete more successfully with other nations. Surely, it is protection running to madness when English traders wish the State to intervene, to protect them against the more successful operations of their rivals. The injustice to the Indians is so glaring that one is almost ashamed of one's countrymen in wishing to have these men treated as Natives, simply because of their success in trade. The very reason that they have been so successful against the dominant race is sufficient to raise them above that degrading level. . . . Enough has been said to show that the Indian merchant is something more than the 'Coolie' of the newspaper, the Dutchman and the disappointed shopkeeper.

28. It will also be seen from the above quotation that the European feeling, when not blinded by selfishness, is not against the Indians. But since it has been insisted throughout the Green books, before alluded to, that both the Burghers of the State and the European residents objected to the Indians, your Petitioners are sending two petitions to His Honour the State President of the S. A. Republic, one showing that a very large number of the Burghers are not only not against the Indians freely residing and trading in the Transvaal, but they would also deem it a hardship, should the harassing measures ultimately result in their withdrawal (App. E); and the other signed by the European residents, showing that, in the opinion of the signatories, their sanitary habits are in no way inferior to those of the Europeans, and that the agitation against the Indians is due to the trade jealousy. (App. F) But were it otherwise—were every European and every Burgher of the State dead against the Indian — even that, your Petitioners submit, cannot affect the main issue, unless the causes which render such a state of things possible were such as would discredit a community against whom such

a feeling exists. At the time of going to press (14-5-95) the Dutch petition was already signed by 484 Burghers and the European by 1340 Europeans.

29. That the award of the Chief Justice of the O. F. S. does not at all simplify the question, and bring its solution a step nearer, will appear from the following:

The active exercise of Her Majesty's Government protection will be just as necessary as if the award had never been given. For, assuming, for argument's sake and that only, that the award is proper and final, and that the Chief Justice of the Transvaal has decided that the Indians must trade and reside in the places fixed by the Government, the question at once arises: where will they be put? May they be put in gullies— in places where sanitation is impossible, and which are so far away from towns as to render it absolutely impossible for the Indians to trade or live decently? That this is quite likely would appear from the following strong protest addressed by His Honour the British Agent against the Transvaal Government assigning an uninhabitable place to the Malays in 1893, at p. 72, Green book No. 2:

> To be forced into a small location on a spot used as a place to deposit the refuse of the town, without any water except the polluted soakage in the gully between the location and the town, must inevitably result in malignant fevers and other diseases breaking out amongst them, whereby their lives and the health of the community in town will be endangered. But, apart from these serious objections, some of these people have not the means of erecting dwellings for themselves on the land pointed out (or anywhere else) such as they have been accustomed to live in. The consequence of forcing them out of their present habitations will, therefore, result in all of them leaving Pretoria to the great inconvenience and loss of the White people who employ their labour, not even to speak of the hardship to themselves. . . .

30. At the last page of the same book, in his Despatch dated the 21st March, 1894, the High Commissioner says as follows:

. . . Her Majesty's Government assume that the Arbitration will apply to any Aboriginal of Asia who may be a British subject.

31. If, in terms of that Despatch, the Arbitration is to apply to the Aboriginals of Asia, the question is, are there any Asiatic Aboriginals at all in the Transvaal, unless all the Asiatics are to be treated as such *ipso facto*—a contention [which] your Petitioners are confident, will not be held out for one moment. Your Petitioners, therefore, will not certainly rank as Aboriginals.

32. If the whole objection to the Indian proceeds from sanitary grounds, the following restrictions are entirely unintelligible:

1. The Indians, like the Kaffirs, cannot become owners of fixed property.
2. The Indians must be registered, the fee being £3 10s.
3. In passing through the Republic, like the Natives, they must be able to produce passes unless they have the registration ticket.
4. They cannot travel first or second class on the railways. They are huddled together in the same compartment with the Natives.

33. The sting of all these insults and indignities becomes more galling when it is borne in mind that many of your Petitioners are large holders of property in Delagoa Bay. There they are so much respected that they cannot take out a third-class railway ticket. They are gladly received by the Europeans there. They are not required to have passes. Why, your Petitioners humbly ask, should they be differently treated in the Transvaal? Do their sanitary habits become filthy as soon as they enter the Transvaal territory? It often happens that the same Indian is differently treated by the same European in Delagoa Bay and the Transvaal.

34. To show how harassing the pass law is your Petitioners have appended hereto an affidavit from Mr. Haji Mahomed Haji Dada, which will speak for itself. (App. G) Who Mr. Haji Mahomed is will be gathered from the copy of a letter

attached to the affidavit. (App. H.) He is one of the foremost Indians in South Africa. Your Petitioners have attached the affidavit by way of illustration only, and to show how hard must be the lot of the other Indians, when a foremost Indian cannot travel without suffering indignity and actual hardships. If it were necessary, hundreds of such cases of ill-treatment could be proved to the hilt.

35. It has been also mentioned that the Indians live as parasites, and spend nothing. So far as the Indian labourers and their children are concerned, the objection will not hold water at all, and they are not supposed to be parasites, even by the most prejudiced Europeans. Your Petitioners may be allowed to mention from personal experience that, so far as a majority of the labourers are concerned, they live above their means and have settled with their families. As to the trading Indians, who are the butt of all the prejudice, a little explanation may be necessary. Your Petitioners, who are traders, do not deny, they take pride in acknowledging, that they send remittances to India for those who are dependent upon them, but the remittances are entirely out of proportion to their expenditure. The only reason why they are successful competitors is because they spend less on luxuries than the European traders. But, all the same, they have to pay rents to the European landlords, wages to the native servants, and to pay Dutch farmers for the animals for meat. The other provisions, such as tea, coffee, &c., are bought in the country.

36. The question, then, really is not whether the Indian is to live in this street or that, but what *status* he is to occupy throughout South Africa. For, what is done in the Transvaal will also affect the action of the two Colonies. There seems to be a general consensus of opinion that the question will have to be settled on a common basis, modified by local conditions.

37. So far as the feeling has been *expressed*, it is to degrade the Indian to the position of the Kaffir. But the

general feeling, not so strongly expressed but here and there voiced in the newspapers, of the respectable portion of the European community is quite the reverse.

38. The Colony of Natal has been inviting the other South African States to a 'Coolie' Conference. The word 'Coolie' has been used officially and it shows how high the expressed feeling runs against the Indians and what the Conference would do, if it could, with regard to the question. In the case put by the Transvaal Government before the Arbitrator, it is stated that the word 'Coolie' applies to *any* person coming from Asia.

39. When the feeling runs so high in South Africa against the Indian, when such a feeling owes its origin to interested agitation, (as it is hoped, has been sufficiently shown above), when it is known that that feeling is by no means shared by all the Europeans, when there is a general scramble for wealth in South Africa, when the state of morality of the people is not particularly high, when there are gross misrepresentations about the habits of the Indians which have given rise to special legislation, it is not too much, your Petitioners submit, to request Your Excellency to receive with the utmost caution, the statements received against your Petitioners, and the proffered solutions of the Indian question.

40. Your Petitioners would also urge upon Your Excellency's consideration that not only does the Proclamation of 1858 entitle your Petitioners to the same privileges and rights as enjoyed by Her Majesty's other subjects, but your Petitioners have been specially assured of such a treatment by Your Excellency's Despatch, which says:

> It is the desire of Her Majesty's Government that the Queen's Indian subjects should be treated upon a footing of equality with all Her Majesty's other subjects.

41. Nor is this a local question; but, your Petitioners submit, it is pre-eminently an Imperial question. The decision of the question cannot but affect and guide the

policy of the other colonies and countries, where by treaty Her Majesty's subjects enjoy freedom of commerce &c., and where Her Majesty's Indian subjects also may emigrate. Again, the question affects a very large Indian population in South Africa. With those who have settled in South Africa, it is almost a question of life and death. By persistent ill-treatment they cannot but degenerate, so much so, that from their civilized habits, they would be degraded to the habits of the aboriginal Natives, and a generation hence, between the progeny of the Indians thus in course of degeneration, and the Natives, there will be very little difference in habits, and customs, and thought. The very object of immigration will be frustrated, and a large portion of Her Majesty's subjects, instead of being raised in the scale of civilization, will be actually lowered. The results of such a state of things cannot but be disastrous. No self-respecting Indian can dare even visit South Africa. All Indian enterprise will be stifled. Your Petitioners have no doubt that Your Excellency will never allow such a sad event to happen in a place where Her Majesty enjoys suzerain power, or where the Union Jack flies.

42. Your Petitioners beg respectfully to point out that, under the present state of feeling against the Indians in South Africa, for Her Majesty's Government to yield to the interested clamour against your Petitioners would be an act of grave injustice to your Petitioners.

43. If it is true that your Petitioners' sanitary habits are not such as to endanger the health of the European community, and if it be true, also, that the agitation against them is due to trade jealousy, your Petitioners submit that the award of the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State cannot be binding, even though it be in strict accordance with the terms of the reference. For, the very reason which induced Her Majesty's Government to assent to a departure from the Convention does not then exist.

44. If, however, Your Excellency is disposed to doubt the statements made herein, as regards your Petitioners' sanitary habits, your Petitioners humbly urge that, in view of the fact that very large interests are at stake, and that there are conflicting statements with regard to your Petitioners' sanitary habits, and that the feeling is very high against the Indians in South Africa, before any departure from the Convention is finally assented to, some impartial inquiry should be made as to the truth of the conflicting statements, and that the whole question of the *status* of the Indian in South Africa should be sifted.

In conclusion, your Petitioners leave their case in Your Excellency's hands, earnestly praying and fully hoping that your Petitioners will not be allowed to become a prey to the colour prejudice, and that Her Majesty's Government will not consent to a treatment of the Indians in the South African Republic which would place them in a degraded and unnatural position and deprive them of the means of earning an honest livelihood.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, &c.[1]

APPENDIX A

I hereby certify that I have practised as a general medical practitioner in the town of Pretoria for the last five years.

During that period I have had a considerable practice amongst the Indians, especially about three years ago, when they were more numerous than at present.

I have generally found them cleanly in their person, and free from the personal diseases due to dirt or careless habits. Their dwellings are generally clean and sanitation is willingly attended to by them. Class considered, I should be of opinion that the lowest class Indian compares most favourably with the lowest class White, i.e., the lowest class Indian lives better and in better habitation, and with more regard to sanitary measures, than the lowest class White.

[1] The original printed copy of the Petition does not bear signatures.

I have, further, found that, during the period that smallpox was epidemic in the town and district, and is still epidemic in the district, that although every nation nearly had one or more of its members at some time in the *lazaretto* there was not a single Indian attached.

Generally, in my opinion, it is impossible to object to the Indians on sanitary grounds, provided always, the inspection of the sanitary authorities is made as strictly and regularly for the Indian as for the White.

27th April, 1895
PRETORIA, Z.A.R.

H. PRIOR VEALE,
B.A., M.B., B.C., (Cantab.)

APPENDIX B

JOHANNESBURG,
1895

This is to certify that I have examined the residences of the bearers of this note, and that they are in a sanitary and hygienic condition, and in fact such as any European might inhabit. I have resided in India. I can certify that their habitations here in the S.A.R. are far superior to those of their native country.

C. P. SPINK, M.R.C.R. & L.R.C.A.,
(London)

APPENDIX C

JOHANNESBURG,
14th March, 1895

Having frequently occasion to visit the better class of the Indian population of Johannesburg (merchants etc., coming from Bombay) in my professional quality, I give as my opinion, that they are as clean in their habits and domestic life as White people of the same standing.

DR. NAHMMACHER, M.D., ETC.

APPENDIX D

JOHANNESBURG,
14th March, 1895

The undersigned, having been informed that the Arbitration Commission in connection with the question regarding the Indian Merchants in the South African Republic is now holding its meeting at Bloemfontein, and, also, having been made aware of the accusations against the

said Indian Merchants, to the effect that on account of their dirty habits they are a danger to reside amongst the European population, hereby wish to distinctly declare:

1st. That the aforementioned Indian Merchants, the majority of whom come from Bombay, keep their business places, as well as their residences, in a clean and proper sanitary state—in fact, just as good as the Europeans.

2nd. That it is a distinct error in calling them "coolies" or inhabitants of British India of a "lower caste", as they decidedly belong to the better and higher castes of India.

HEYMANN GORDON & CO.
BRANDE & MEIRKS
LINDSAY & INNES
GUSTAV SCHNEIDER
C. LIEBE
CHRISTOPHER P. SPINK
A. WENTWORTH BALL
p.p., J. GARLICK
H. WOODCROFT
p.p., GORDON MITCHELL & CO.
JOHANNESBURG. Z.A.R
R. COURTER
P. BARNETT & CO.
p.p., ISRAEL BROS.
H. CLAPHAM
p.p., PAYNE BROS.
H. F. BEART
JOSEPH LAZARUS & CO.
GEO. JAS. KETTLE & CO.
BORTEN'S BROS.
p.p., J. W. JAGGER & CO.
T. CHARLE
R. G. KRAMER & CO.
p.p., HOLT & HOLT
B. EMANUEL

ADAM ALEXANDER
B. ALEXANDER
A. BEHRENS
S. COLEMAN
ALEXANDER P. KAY
p.p., G. KOENISBERG
J. H. HOPKINS
p.p., LIEBERMANN,
BELLSTEDT & CO.
J. H. HOPKINS
J. H. HOPKINS
SHLOM & ARMSBERG
p.p., HUGO BINGEN
JAS. W. C.
p.p., H. BERNBERG & CO.,
GENERAL MERCHANTS AND IMPORTERS, JOHANNESBURG
E. NEELL
J. KUSTING
N. W. LEWIS
SPENCE & HURRY
FREISMAN & SHAPISO
J. FOGELMAN
T. RATES & CO.
p.p., B. GUNDELFINGER
J. GUNDELFINGER

APPENDIX E

(*True Translation*)

TO

HIS HONOUR THE STATE PRESIDENT
OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, PRETORIA

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR :

In view of the gross misrepresentation by certain interested Europeans residing in the Republic, to the effect that the burghers of this State are opposed to the Indians residing or trading in the State, and their agitation against these people, we, the undersigned burghers, beg respectfully to state that so far from the burghers being opposed to these people stopping and trading in the State, they recognise in them a peaceful and law-abiding, and therefore desirable, class of people. To the poor they are a veritable blessing inasmuch as by their keen competition they keep down the prices of necessaries of life which they can do owing to their thrifty and temperate habits.

We venture to submit that their withdrawal from the State will be a dire calamity to us, especially those of us who, living far away from centres of business, depend upon the Indians for the supply of our daily wants, and that therefore any measures restrictive of their freedom, and having for their object their ultimate removal, and especially that of those Indians who are traders and hawkers, will necessarily interfere with our enjoyment and comforts. We, therefore, humbly pray that the Government will not take any steps that may scare away the Indians from the Transvaal. [Signed by a number of burghers]

APPENDIX F

TO

HIS HONOUR THE STATE PRESIDENT
OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, PRETORIA

We, the undersigned Europeans residing in this Republic, beg to protest against the agitation set up against the Indians, residing or trading freely in the country, by certain interested persons.

So far as our experience is concerned, we believe their sanitary habits to be in no way inferior to those of the Europeans, and the statements about prevalence of infectious diseases among them are certainly without ground, especially as regards the Indian traders.

We firmly believe that the agitation owes its origin not to their habits as regards sanitation, but to trade jealousy, because, owing to their frugal and temperate habits, they have been able to keep down the prices of necessaries of life and have therefore been an inestimable boon to the poor classes of the society in the State.

We do not believe any good cause exists for compelling them to reside or trade in separate quarters.

We would therefore humbly request Your Honour not to adopt or countenance any measure that would tend to restrict their freedom and ultimately result in their withdrawal from the Republic, a result that cannot but strike at the very means of their livelihood and cannot, therefore, we humbly submit, be contemplated with complacency in a Christian country.

[The above petition is printed in Afrikaans and in English. The original signatures do not appear on the filed copy.]

APPENDIX G

I, Haji Mahomed Haji Dada, managing and senior partner of Haji Mahomed Haji Dada & Co., of Durban, Pretoria, Delagoa Bay and elsewhere, merchants, do make oath and say that:

1. Some time in the year 1894, I was travelling from Johannesburg to Charlestown by coach.
2. As I reached the Transvaal border, a European with a uniform and another came up and asked me for a pass. I said I had no pass and was never before required to produce any pass.
3. The man thereupon roughly said to me that I would have to get one.
4. I asked him to get one and offered to pay.
5. He then very roughly aked me to go down with him to the pass officer, and threatened to pull me out if I did not do so.
6. In order to avoid further trouble I got down. I was made to walk about 2 miles, the man riding on a horse.
7. On my reaching the office I was required to take no pass but was only asked where I was going to. I was then asked to go away.
8. The man who was on horseback, and who went with me, also left me and I had to walk back two miles to find the coach gone.
9. I was therefore obliged, although I had paid my fare as far as Charlestown, to walk there, a distance of over two miles.
10. I know from personal knowledge that many other Indians, similarly placed, have undergone such troubles and indignity.

11. About a few days ago, I had to travel to Pretoria from Delagoa Bay, in the company of two friends.
12. We were all required to arm ourselves with passes, just as the Natives of South Africa are required to do, in order to be able to travel in the Transvaal.

HAJEE MAHOMED HAJEE DADA

Sworn before me at Pretoria, this the 24th day of April, 1895.
Envaralohery
V. Rrasak

APPENDIX H

Tel. & Cable Address: "BOATING"

Point, PORT NATAL,
2nd March, 1895

FROM

THE AFRICA BOATING COMPANY, LTD.

TO

MR. HAJI MAHOMED HAJI DADA (MESSRS. HAJI MAHOMED HAJI DADA & CO.)

DEAR SIR,

Seeing you are about to pay a visit to India, we take this opportunity of placing on record our very high appreciation of your various business qualifications which we have proved during our business relations with you for the last fifteen years, and it gives us very great pleasure in stating that your integrity in business matters has never been questioned by any of the commercial community during your residence here, and we trust you will see your way to return to Natal, and we then hope that we shall renew our business relations with you once again. Hoping you will have a very pleasant voyage,

We are,
yours faithfully,
For the African Boating Co.,
(*Signed*) CHARLES T. HITCHINS

Petition, with Appendices, taken from a photostat of a printed copy.

53. *PETITION TO LORD ELGIN*[1]

[*May, 1895*]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF ELGIN, P.C., G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E. &c. &c.
VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA
CALCUTTA

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
RESIDING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Petitioners representing the Indian community in the South African Republic venture hereby to approach Your Excellency with regard to Her Majesty's Indian British subjects in the South African Republic.

Your Petitioners instead of reiterating the facts and arguments embodied in a similar petition,[2] signed by over 10,000 British Indians, and sent to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, beg to append hereto a copy of the petition with its annexures, and commend it to Your Excellency's perusal.

Your Petitioners after mature deliberation have come to the conclusion that unless they sought the direct protection of Your Excellency as Her Majesty's representative and virtual Ruler of all India, and unless that protection was graciously accorded, the position of the Indians in the South African Republic, and indeed throughout the whole of South Africa, would be utterly helpless and the enterpris-

[1] This petition, along with the petition addressed to Lord Ripon, was forwarded by Sir Jacobus de Wet on May 30, 1895, to the High Commissioner, Cape Town.

[2] Petition to Lord Ripon. *Vide* p. 187, *supra*.

ing Indians in South Africa would be forcibly degraded to the position of the natives of South Africa, and this through no fault of their own.

If an intelligent stranger were to visit the South African Republic, and were told that there was a class of people in South Africa who could not hold fixed property, who could not move about the State without passes, who alone had to pay a special registration fee of £3 10s. as soon as they entered the country for purposes of trade, who could not get licences to trade, and who would shortly be ordered to remove to places far away from towns, where only they could reside and trade, and who could not stir out of their houses after 9 o'clock, and that stranger were asked to guess the reasons for such special disabilities, would he not conclude that these people must be veritable ruffians, anarchists, a political danger to the State and society? And yet your Petitioners beg to assure Your Excellency that the Indians who are labouring under all the above disabilities, are neither ruffians nor anarchists, but one of the most peaceful and law-abiding communities in South Africa, and especially in the South African Republic.

For in Johannesburg, while there are people belonging to European nationalities who are a source of real danger to the State, and who have necessitated only lately, an increase of the police force, and have thrown too much work on the detective department, the Indian community have not given the State any cause for anxiety on that score.

In support of the above, your Petitioners respectfully refer Your Excellency to the newspapers throughout South Africa.

Even the active agitation, that has brought about the present state of things with regard to the Indian community, has not desired to bring any such charges against the Indians.

The only charge brought forward is that the Indians do not observe proper sanitation. Your Petitioners trust that the charge has been conclusively shown to be groundless in the representation to His Excellency the Right

Honourable the Marquis of Ripon. But assuming that the charge has some ground, it is clear that that could not be a reason for preventing the Indians from holding fixed property, or moving about the country freely, and without restraint on their liberty. That could not be a reason for making the Indians liable for a special payment of £3 10s.

It might be said that the Government of the South African Republic has already passed certain laws, and that the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State has already given his award which is binding on Her Majesty's Government.

These objections, your Petitioners humbly believe, have been answered in the accompanying petition. The London Convention specially protects the rights of all Her Majesty's British subjects. This is a recognized fact. Her Majesty's Government assented to a departure from the Convention and also to arbitration on *sanitary grounds*. And such assent to a departure from the Convention, your Petitioners are informed, was given without consulting Your Excellency's predecessor in office. Thus, so far as the Indian Government is concerned, your Petitioners venture to urge that the assent is not binding. That the Indian Government should have been consulted is self-evident. And even if Your Excellency were ill-disposed to intervene on your Petitioners' behalf at this stage and on this ground alone, the fact that the reasons which induced the above assent did not and do not exist, that in fact Her Majesty's Government has been misled by misrepresentations is, your Petitioners submit, sufficient to justify them in praying for Your Excellency's intervention, and Your Excellency in granting the prayer.

And the issues involved are so tremendously important and imperial, that in view of your Petitioners' emphatic but respectful protest against the allegation about sanitation, your Petitioners humbly urge that the question cannot be settled without a thorough inquiry, without injustice being done to Her Majesty's Indian British subjects in the South African Republic.

Without further encroaching upon Your Excellency's valuable time, your Petitioners would again request Your Excellency's undivided attention to the annexure, and in conclusion, earnestly hope that Your Excellency's protection will be liberally granted to the Indian British subjects residing in South Africa.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners shall for ever pray, &c.

From a photostat of a printed copy.

54. *PETITION TO NATAL COUNCIL*[1]

DURBAN,
[Prior to *June 26, 1895*]

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS
OF THE HONOURABLE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

THE PETITION OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS,
RESIDING AS TRADERS IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Petitioners, as representing the Indian community in the Colony, venture hereby to petition Your Honourable Council with regard to the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill, so far as it affects the present term of indenture, and proposes a yearly licence of £3 to be taken out by every immigrant wishing to stop in the Colony as a free Indian, after finishing his term of indenture.

Your Petitioners respectfully submit that both the clauses above referred to are entirely unjust and uncalled for.

Your Petitioners humbly draw the attention of this Honourable House to the following from the report of

[1] The petition was published in *The Natal Mercury* on June 26, 1895.

the delegates, Messrs. Binns and Mason, who were commissioned to go to India in connection with this matter:

> So far no second term of indenture has been agreed to in the case of any country to which coolies emigrated, although the consent of the Government of India had frequently been asked for; and in no instance had the condition of compulsory return at the end of the indentures been sanctioned.

Thus the clauses in the Bill are a total departure, your Petitioners submit, for the worse, from the practice prevalent throughout the British Colonies.

Assuming that the average age of an indentured Indian at the time of his entering into the contract of indenture is 25, under the clause which expects the Indian to work for 10 years, the best part of the life of the indentured Indian would be simply spent away in a state of bondage.

For an Indian to return to India after continuous 10 years' stay in the Colony would be pure fatuity. All the old cords and ties will have been broken up. Such an Indian will be comparatively a stranger in his motherland. To find work in India would be almost impossible. The market is already overcrowded, and he will not have amassed sufficient fortune to enable him to live on the interest on his capital.

The total of the wages for 10 years would amount to £87. If the indentured Indian saves £50, allowing only £37 for clothing and other expenses during the whole 10 years, that capital will not give him interest sufficient to keep body and soul together, even in a poor country like India. Such an Indian, therefore, even if he ventured to return to India, would be compelled to return under indenture, and thus his whole life would be spent in bondage. Moreover, during the 10 years the indentured Indian would be entirely neglecting his family, should he have any. And a family man will not be able to save even £50. Your Petitioners know several instances of indentured Indians with families having saved nothing.

As to the 2nd Clause, about the £3 licence, your Petitioners submit that it is calculated to create wide discontent and oppression. Why one class of Her Majesty's subjects, and this the most useful to the Colony, should be singled out for such taxation, it is, in the humble opinion of your Petitioners, difficult to understand.

Your Petitioners most respectfully venture to submit that it is not in accordance with the principles of simple justice and equity, to make a man pay heavily for being allowed to remain free in the Colony after he has already lived under bondage for 10 years.

The fact that the clauses will apply only to those Indians who would come to the Colony after the Bill has become law, and that they would know the terms under which they may come, does not free the clauses from the objections sought to be raised against them. For both the contracting parties, your Petitioners submit, will not have the same freedom of action. An Indian hard-pressed by pangs of poverty and finding it impossible to support his family, can scarcely be called a free agent when he signs the contract of indenture. Men have been known to consent to do far worse things in order to be free from immediately pressing difficulties. Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly hope and pray that the clauses above referred to will not meet with the approval of this Honourable House, and for this act of justice and mercy, your Petitioners shall for ever pray, &c. &c.

(Signed) ABDULLA HAJI ADAM
AND SEVERAL OTHER INDIANS

From a photostat of a printed copy.

55. PETITION TO MR. CHAMBERLAIN

[DURBAN,
August 11, 1895]

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES, LONDON

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Memorialists, representing the Indian community in the Colony of Natal, respectfully venture to approach you with respect to the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill recently passed by the Hon. Legislative Assembly, and the Hon. Legislative Council of Natal, in so far as it affects the existing conditions of indenture and requires a special licence, costing £3 every year, to be taken out by the indentured Indians coming under that Law and wishing to remain in the Colony as free Indians.

2. Your Memorialists, with a view to have the Clauses dealing with the above matter left out, presented respectful memorials to both the Honourable Houses, but, your Memorialists regret to mention, without avail. The copies of the memorials[1] are annexed hereto, and marked A and B respectively.

3. The Clauses that deal with the matter are as follows:

Clause 2. From and after the date when this Act shall take effect the indentures to be signed by Indian Immigrants as provided by Schedules B and C of the Indian Immigration Law, 1891, referred to in Section 11 of the said Law, shall contain a Covenant

[1] *Vide* pp. 176-9 and pp. 212-4, *supra*.

by the Indian Immigrants, in words as follows:

> And we further agree that after the expiration or other determination we shall either return to India or remain in Natal under indentures to be from time to time entered into; provided that each term of new indentured service shall be for two years, and provided further, that the rate of wages for each year of indentured service after that provided by this Contract shall be 16/- per month for the first year, 17/- per month for the second, 18/- per month for the third year, 19/- per month for the fourth year, and 20/- per month for the fifth and each succeeding year.

Clause 6 runs as follows:

> Every indentured Indian who shall have entered into the Covenant set out in Section 2 of this Act, and who shall fail, neglect, or refuse to return to India, or become re-indentured in Natal, shall take out year by year, a pass or licence to remain in the Colony to be issued by the Magistrate of his district, and shall pay for such pass or licence a yearly sum of £3 sterling, which may be recovered by summary process by any Clerk of the Peace or, other Officer appointed to get in such licence money.

The Schedule B referred to in Clause 2, quoted above, so far as it relates to the period of service is as follows:

> We, the undersigned, emigrants from . . . to Natal, hereby engage to serve the employer to whom we may respectively be allotted by the Protector of Indian Immigrants to Natal; provided that we shall receive monthly in money the wages stated hereunder opposite our respective names, and the allowances following.

4. From the above it will be seen, that if the Bill under discussion became law, an indentured Indian, in case he desires to settle in the Colony after the first five years of his indentured service, should either have to remain under perpetual indenture, or pay a yearly tax of £3; your Memorialists have used the word *tax* advisedly, because that was the word used in the original Bill before it passed the committee stage. Your Memorialists submit that the mere change of name from tax to licence, does not make it the less offensive but shows the knowledge on the part of the framers that a special poll-tax, on a special class of people in the Colony, is entirely repugnant to the British

notions of justice.

5. Now, your Memorialists humbly, but emphatically, submit, that to raise the term of indenture from five years to a practically indefinite period is extremely unjust, especially because such a measure is absolutely uncalled for so far as the industries protected, or affected by, the indentured Indians are concerned.

6. The clauses owe their origin to the Commission that was sent out to India in the year 1894 by the Natal Government, and the report made by the Delegates, Messrs. Binns and Mason, who formed the Commission. The reasons given in that report for such legislation are given at pp. 20 and 21 of the *Annual Report of the Protector of Immigrants for 1894*. Your Memorialists venture to quote the following from the report of the Delegates:

> In a country where the native population is in number so far in excess of the European, the unlimited settlement of Indians is not considered desirable, and there is a general wish that when they have completed their last period of indenture they should return to India. There are already about 25,000 free Indians settled in the Colony, many of whom have allowed their right to a return passage to lapse; this is exclusive of a very considerable Banyan trading population!

7. Thus the reasons for the special arrangement are political merely. Properly speaking, there is no question of overcrowding at all. There can be none in a newly opened-up country where there are yet vast tracts of land entirely uninhabited and uncultivated.

8. Again, in the same report, the Delegates state as follows:

> There is a strong feeling amongst the merchants and shopkeepers with regard to the Arabs, who are all traders and not workers; but, as they are mostly British subjects and do not go to the Colony under any form of agreement, it is recognised that they cannot be interfered with.

* * *

> The Coolie does not come into competition to any considerable extent with the European. Field work for Europeans is impossible on the coast, where all the plantations are situated, and the number of servants other than Coolies and Natives has always been very small.
>
> * * *
>
> Although we are decidedly of opinion that up to the present the working Indians *who have settled down* (the italics are your Memorialists') have been of great benefit to the Colony, we cannot avoid, having regard to the future, and, in the face of the great Native problem yet to be solved in South Africa, sharing in the concern which is now felt. If a large proportion of the Coolies had taken advantage of the return passage provided for them, there would have been less cause for alarm.

9. Your Memorialists most respectfully submit that the above extracts, which form part of the reasons given for measures restrictive of the settlement of *freed Indians* in the Colony, go to prove the exact opposite; for if the Indian traders, to which class most of your Memorialists belong, who "do not go to the Colony under any form of agreement", could not be interfered with, *much less* the indentured Indians, who are also equally British subjects and who are, so to speak, invited to go to the Colony, and whose *settlement* (in the Delegates' own words) "has been of great benefit to the Colony", and who have therefore a special claim on the goodwill and attention of the Colonists.

10. And, if the 'Coolie' "does not come into competition to any considerable extent with the Europeans", where is the justification, your Memorialists humbly ask, for adopting measures that would make it difficult for the indentured Indians to earn honest bread in peace and freedom? It does not certainly lie in any qualities special to the indentured Indians which render them dangerous members of society. The peace-loving disposition and the mildness of the Indian nation are proverbial. Their obedience to authorities over them is no less prominent a trait of their character, and it would not lie in the mouth of the Delegates

to say otherwise; for the Protector, who was one of the Delegates, in his report, at p.15 of the same book, says:

> Many persons, I am aware, condemn the Indians as a race, yet these persons cannot fail, if they look around them, to see hundreds of these Indians honestly and peaceably pursuing their several useful and desirable occupations.
>
> * * *
>
> I am pleased to be able to state that the Indians generally resident in the Colony continue to form a prosperous, enterprising and *law-abiding* section of the community.

11. The Hon. the Attorney-General, in moving the second reading of the Bill, is reported to have said that:

> There was no intention to interfere with the introduction of labour to the injury of any industry, but these Indians were brought here for the purpose of supplying labour for the development of local industries, and were not intended to form portion of the South African nation which was being built up in the various States.

12. With the greatest deference to the learned Attorney-General, your Memorialists humbly submit that the above remarks condemn entirely the clauses under discussion, and venture to believe that Her Majesty's Government will not endorse such remarks by sanctioning the Bill.

13. Your Memorialists venture to think that it is against the spirit of the British Constitution to countenance measures that tend to keep men under perpetual bondage. That the Bill, if passed, would do so, it is submitted, is self-evident.

14. *The Natal Mercury*, the Government organ, of the 11th May, 1895, thus justifies the measure:

> This much, however, the Government cannot accede to, that men who contract at fair wages to assist the Colonists, should be allowed to break their contract, and remain competitors against the Colonists, those whom, and for no other purpose and no other condition, they came to serve. To do otherwise would be to destroy all distinction between right and wrong and to give tacit disavowal of the existence of law and equity. There is no desire for, nor is there any, harshness of any kind, nor is there anything to which unbiassed judgment can take exception.

15. Your Memorialists have quoted the above to show

what feeling exists even amongst responsible quarters against the Indians only because *some very few* dare to trade in the Colony, after having served as labourers not only under and during their term of indenture, but a long time after the completion of their term.

16. The statement requiring those who are admittedly indispensable to the welfare of the Colony to remain either under perpetual bondage or to "purchase freedom", as it is put by *The Natal Advertiser*, 9-5-95, by paying an annual tax of £3, "is neither harsh nor inequitable", will not, your Memorialists feel sure, be accepted by Her Majesty's Government.

17. The injustice of the clauses seems to be so evident and strong, that even *The Natal Advertiser*, a paper which is by no means favourable towards the Indian, felt it, and expressed it in the following terms on the 16th May, 1895:

> The penal clause of the Bill originally was to the effect that the Indian, failing to return to India, should pay 'an annual tax to the Government'. On Tuesday, the Attorney-General moved that this be altered to read: 'Should take out a pass or licence to remain in the Colony', for which £3 would be payable. This is decidedly an alteration for the better, and effects the same end under less disagreeable terms. A broad question, however, is raised by this proposal to establish a special tax on the Coolie settlers. If such a disability is to be placed on Coolies coming from another part of the Empire, surely its application should be extended to include members of other non-European races, who have no connection with the British Empire, such as Chinese, Arabs, Kaffirs from outside States, and all such visitors. To specially select the Coolies for attention in this way, and to allow all other *aliens* to settle with impunity, and without disability, is not an equitable arrangement. The practice of taxing *aliens*, if it is to be inaugurated at all, should surely commence with those races not under the British flag in their native land, and not with those who, whether we like the fact or not, are the subjects of the same Sovereign as ourselves. These should be the last, not the first, to be placed by us under exceptional disabilities.

18. Your Memorialists submit that the arrangement has not appealed to any fair-minded men at all. How the Indian Government could be persuaded by the Natal

Delegates to make a promise to sanction an indefinite extension of the indentures, or compulsory return, no matter how reluctantly, your Memorialists do not profess to know. But your Memorialists venture to hope that the case, as put here, on behalf of the indentured Indians will receive full attention from both Her Majesty's Government and the Indian Government, and that any sanction given on the representation of an *ex parte* Commission will not be allowed to prejudice the case of the Indentured Indians.

19. For the sake of ready reference your Memorialists beg leave to quote as follows from His Excellency the Viceroy's despatch to His Excellency the Governor of Natal, dated the 17th September, 1894:

> I should myself have preferred the continuance of the existing system, under which it is open to an immigrant at the termination of his period of indenture to settle in the Colony on his own account, and I have little sympathy with the views that would prevent any subjects of the Crown from settling in any Colony under the British flag. But, in consideration of the feelings at present manifested in the Colony of Natal towards Indian settlers, I am prepared to accept the proposals (*a* to *f*) set forth by the Delegates in the memorandum of 20th January, 1894, referred to in the preceding paragraph, subject to the following provisions, viz.,
>
> (*a*) That a Coolie when first recruited shall be required by the terms of his Contract to return to India, within or immediately on the expiration of the period of his indenture, unless he may prefer to re-enter into a further indenture on the same conditions.
>
> (*b*) That such Coolies as may refuse to return should in no case be made subject to penalties under criminal law, and
>
> (*c*) That all renewals shall be for a period of two years, and that a free passage should be secured to the immigrant at the end of the first term for which his engagement is made as well as at the end of every subsequent renewal.
>
> The alterations in the existing system which I am prepared to sanction with the approval of Her Majesty's Government, may be summarized as follows.[1]

20. Your Memorialists notice with a feeling of relief that

[1] The original does not furnish the summary.

Her Majesty's Government, have not yet approved of the suggestions of the Delegates.

21. To show yet further how grossly unjust the adoption of the compulsory return or re-indenture has seemed from the first time that the idea was started, your Memorialists crave leave to quote from the report of and evidence taken before the Immigration Commission that sat in Natal in the year 1885.

22. Mr. J. R. Saunders, one of the Commissioners, forcibly puts his views on the matter in his additional report in the following terms:

> Though the Commission has made no recommendation on the subject of passing a law to force Indians back to India at the expiration of their term of service unless they renew their indentures, I wish to express my strong condemnation of any such idea, and I feel convinced that many who now advocate the plan, when they realize what it means, will reject it as energetically as I do. Stop Indian immigration and face results, but don't try to do what I can show is a great wrong.
>
> What is it but taking the best out of servants (the good as well as the bad), and then refusing them the enjoyment of the reward! Forcing them back (if we could, but we cannot) when their best days have been spent for our benefit. Whereto? Why, back to face a prospect of starvation from which they sought to escape when they were young. Shylock-like, taking the pound of flesh, and Shylock-like we may rely on meeting—Shylock's reward.
>
> Stop Indian immigration if you will; if there are not enough unoccupied houses now, empty more by clearing out Arabs and Indians who live in them, and who add to the productive and consuming power of a less than half-peopled country. But let us trace results in this one branch of the enquiry, taking it as an example of others, and trace out how untenanted houses depreciate the value of properties and securities—how, out of this must result stagnation in the building trade and those other trades and stores for supplies dependent on it—follow out how this leads to a reduced demand for White mechanics, and with the reduction in spending power of so many, how fall of revenue is to be expected next, need of retrenchment or taxation, or both. Let this result and others, far too numerous to be calculated in detail, be faced, and if blind race sentimentalism or jealousy is to prevail, so be it. The Colony can

stop Indian immigration, and that perhaps far more easily and permanently than some 'popularity seekers' would desire. But force men off at the end of their service, this the Colony cannot do. And I urge on it not to discredit a fair name by trying.

23. The late member of the late Legislative Council and the present Attorney-General (the Hon. Mr. Escombe), giving his evidence before the Commission said (p. 177):

With reference to time-expired Indians, I do not think that it ought to be compulsory on any man to go to any part of the world save for a crime for which he is transported; I hear a great deal of this question; I have been asked again and again to take a different view, but I have not been able to do it. A man is brought here, *in theory with his own consent, in practice very often without his consent,* (the italics are your Memorialists') he gives the best five years of his life, he forms new ties, forgets the old ones, perhaps establishes a home here, and he cannot, according to my view of right and wrong, be sent back. Better by far to stop the further introduction of Indians altogether than to take what work you can out of them and order them away. The Colony, or part of the Colony, seems to want Indians but also wishes to avoid the consequences of Indian immigration. The Indian people do no harm as far as I know; in certain respects they do a great deal of good. I have never heard a reason to justify the extradition of a man who has behaved well for five years. I do not think that the Indian, at the expiration of his five years' service, should be placed under police supervision unless he is a criminal. I know not why Arabs should be placed under police supervision more than Europeans. In cases of some Arabs the thing is simply ridiculous. They are men of large means, large connections, who are always used in trade if they can be dealt with more profitably than others.

24. Your Memorialists, while drawing your attention to the above, cannot help expressing their regret that the gentleman who expressed the above views ten years ago should now be the member to introduce the Bill under discussion.

25. Mr. H. Binns, who went with Mr. Mason as a delegate to induce the Indian Government to sanction the compulsory return or re-indenture, expressed the following opinion in giving his evidence before the Commission:

I think the idea which has been mooted, that all Indians should be compelled to return to India at the end of their term of indenture, is most unfair to the Indian population, and would never be sanctioned by the Indian Government. In my opinion the free Indian population is a most useful section of the community. A large proportion of them, considerably larger than is generally supposed, are in service in the Colony, particularly employed as house servants in the towns and villages. Before there was a free Indian population the towns of Pietermaritzburg and Durban had no supply of fruit, vegetables, and fish. At present all these things are fully supplied. We have never had any immigrants from Europe who have shown any inclination to become market gardeners and fishermen, and I am of opinion that but for the free Indian population, the markets of Pietermaritzburg and Durban would be as badly supplied now as they were ten years ago. (pp. 155-156).

26. The present Chief Justice and the then Attorney-General expressed the following opinion:

I object to any alteration in the terms of the laws under which Indians are introduced into the Colony. In my opinion, numbers of the Indians who have been introduced, have in a great measure provided on the coast for the failure of White Immigrants, and have cultivated lands, which would otherwise remain uncultivated, with the crops which are of real advantage to the inhabitants of the Colony. Many who have not availed themselves of the return passage to India, have turned out to be trusty and useful domestic servants. (p. 327)

27. It is yet possible to take out extracts from the same voluminous report and evidence to show what the most distinguished men in the Colony have thought about the arrangement.

28. Your Memorialists further beg to draw your attention to the following from Messrs. Binns and Mason's Report:

So far, no second term of indenture has been agreed to in the case of any country to which Coolies emigrated, although the consent of the Government of India has been frequently asked for, and in no case has the condition of compulsory return at the end of the indenture been sanctioned.

29. It has been said in the Colony, in defence of the measure, that there can be no injustice, where two parties voluntarily agree to do a certain thing, and that the Indians before coming to Natal will know under what conditions they will go to Natal. This point has been dealt with in the petitions to the Hon. the Legislative Assembly, and the Hon. the Legislative Council, and your Memorialists venture to repeat that, when the contracting parties are not situated equally, the proposition is entirely inapplicable. An Indian who, in order "to escape from starvation", as Mr. Saunders has put it, seeks indenture, can hardly be called a free agent.

30. So recently as 1894, the evidence as to the indispensableness of the Indian has been dwelt upon in the Protector's Report referred to above. At p. 15 he says:

> If it were possible even for a short space of time to withdraw the whole of the Indian population from this Colony, I am convinced that, with but very few exceptions, every industry in existence at the present time would collapse, solely for the want of reliable labour. There is no getting over the fact that the Native as a rule will not work; hence it is generally admitted throughout the Colony that without the Indian as a labourer, no industry, agricultural or otherwise, of any importance could possibly be carried on successfully, and not only this but almost every householder in Natal would be without domestic servants.

31. If almost the whole current of what may be called expert opinion, from beginning up to date, goes to show the usefulness of the Indians, then, your Memorialists submit, it is not too much to say that to keep such people under perpetual bondage, or to make them pay a yearly tax of £3 whether they can afford it or not, is, to say the very least, absolutely one-sided and selfish.

32. Your Memorialists beg respectfully to draw your attention to the fact that, were the Bill to become law, the very objects of immigration will be frustrated in all its aspects. If it is to enable the Indians to improve their material condition ultimately, the object certainly will not be fulfilled by compelling them to remain under perpetual inden-

ture. If it be to relieve the overcrowded parts of India, that object also will be frustrated. For, the object of the Bill is not to allow the number of Indians in the Colony to increase. The desire is to replace those who can no longer bear the yoke of indenture by fresh importation, and to force the former back to India. Thus your Memorialists humbly submit that the last state will be worse than the first. For, while the number of Indians in the overcrowded districts, so far as Natal as an outlet is concerned, will remain the same, those who would return against their will cannot but be a source of additional anxiety and trouble, because they, being without any prospect of work or any capital to maintain them, may have to be maintained at the public expense. It may be said in reply to this objection that it presupposes a state of things which will never happen, that is to say, the Indians will gladly pay the annual tax. Your Memorialists, however, beg leave to point out that such an argument, if advanced, would really go to prove that the clauses about re-indenture and tax are absolutely useless, in so far as they will not produce the desired effect. It has never been contended that the object is to raise any revenue.

33. Your Memorialists, therefore submit that, if the Colony cannot put up with the Indians, the only course, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, is to stop all future immigration to Natal, at any rate for the time being. Your Memorialists beg respectfully, but emphatically, to protest against an arrangement that gives all the benefit to one party only, and that, indeed, the least in need of it. Such stopping of immigration will not, your Memorialists submit, materially affect the congested parts of India.

34. Your Memorialists have so far discussed both the indenture and the licence clauses together. As to the latter, your Memorialists beg to draw your attention to the fact that even in the Transvaal—a foreign State—the Government have not ventured to levy an annual tax on the Indians

who go there of their own accord and on their own means. There is only a licence of £3 10s. to be taken out once for all. And this too has, your Memorialists understand, among other things, formed the subject of a memorial to Her Majesty's Government. Moreover, the licence in this case is an annual tax in its most obnoxious form. This tax has to be paid whether the unfortunate victim has the means or not. When a member, during the discussion, asked how the tax will be collected if any Indian objected to or did not pay it, the Hon. Attorney-General remarked that there would always be found sufficient in the defaulting Indian's house to attach under a summary process!

Lastly, your Memorialists submit that the introduction of the licence clause goes beyond the limits laid down by the Viceroy's Despatch referred to above.

In conclusion, your Memorialists most earnestly pray and confidently hope that Her Majesty's Government will come to the conclusion that the clauses discussed herein are manifestly unjust, and will, therefore, be pleased to disallow the Indian Immigration Amendment Bill referred to above, or grant such other relief as may meet the ends of justice.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray &c. &c.

From a photostat of a printed copy.

56. *MEMORIAL TO LORD ELGIN*

[DURBAN,
August 11, 1895]

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD ELGIN, VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL
OF INDIA IN COUNCIL, CALCUTTA

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED
INDIANS IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH,

That your Memorialists, who are Her Majesty's Indian subjects, crave leave to draw Your Excellency's attention to the humble memorial[1] addressed to Her Majesty's Government with regard to certain clauses of the Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill which was recently passed by the Hon. the Legislative Assembly and the Hon. the Legislative Council of Natal, and which is partly based upon Your Excellency's Dispatch to His Excellency the Governor of Natal on the subject thereof, a copy of which is annexed hereto.

Besides drawing Your Excellency's attention to the above memorial, your Memorialists beg respectfully to state as follows with regard to the Bill:

Your Excellency's Memorialists have noticed with regret that Your Excellency is disposed to sanction the principle of compulsory re-indenture, or compulsory return.

Your Memorialists also regret that they did not send a representation at the time the Delegates[2] set out for India. It will be idle to discuss the causes that prevented such a

[1] *Vide* p. 215, *supra*.
[2] *Vide* p. 217, *supra*.

course from being adopted. Your Memorialists, however, confidently hope that the wrong inflicted would be so great, in case the Bill became law, that the above omission will not come in the way of its being averted.

Your Memorialists, with the greatest deference, venture to point out that, if the non-compliance with the condition as to compulsory return could not set the criminal law in motion, the insertion in the contracts of such a clause is absolutely useless, if not actually harmful, inasmuch as it might encourage the contracting party to break his contract, and the law would connive at such a breach. And since such extreme precaution pre-supposes the injustice of the contract, your Memorialists respectfully submit that the reasons adduced for inducing the sanction are absolutely insufficient, if any reasons could justify it.

As has been hinted at in the annexure, your Memorialists implore Your Excellency not to sanction any of the clauses objected to, but, in accordance with the emphatically expressed opinions of Mr. J. R. Saunders and the Hon. Mr. Escombe quoted in the annexure[1], to stop immigration to Natal.

Your Memorialists respectfully beg to protest against any section of Her Majesty's subjects, be they the poorest, being practically enslaved or subjected to a special, obnoxious poll-tax, in order that a body of Colonists, who already have been deriving the greatest benefits from such subjects, may be able to satisfy their whims or desire to exact more from the same men without any return whatsoever. In calling the idea of compulsory re-indenture, or in lieu thereof, of a poll-tax, a whim, your Memorialists believe they have used the right expression. For, your Memorialists firmly believe there would be no cause for alarm even if the Indian population were trebled in the Colony.

But, your Memorialists humbly submit that, in a matter

[1] *Vide* pp. 217-9, *supra*.

like the above, the wish of the Colony cannot guide Your Excellency's decision, but that the interests of the Indians affected by the clauses should also be considered. And your Memorialists have no hesitation in submitting, with all due respect, that the clauses, if ever sanctioned, will be a grave injustice and wrong to the most helpless of Her Majesty's Indian subjects.

Five years' indenture, your Memorialists submit, is long enough to undergo. To raise it to an indefinite period would mean that an Indian who cannot pay a poll-tax of £3 or return to India, must for ever remain without freedom, without any prospect of ever bettering his condition, without ever even thinking of changing his hut, his meagre allowance and ragged clothes, for a better house, enjoyable food and respectable clothing. He must not even think of educating his children according to his own taste or comforting his wife with any pleasure or recreation. Your Memorialists submit that a life of semi-starvation in India, but of freedom, and among friends and relations in the same state would certainly be better and more desirable than the above. In this case the Indian may expect and get the chance to better his lot, in that, never. That, your Memorialists submit and believe, never was the object of encouraging immigration.

In conclusion, therefore, your Memorialists earnestly pray and confidently hope that, if the Colony does not want the Indian immigration without the arrangement objected to being sanctioned, Your Excellency may be graciously pleased to stop future immigration to Natal, or grant such other relief as may seem just.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray etc. etc.

(Sd.) ABDUL KARIM HAJEE ADAM
AND OTHERS

From a photostat of a printed copy.

57. *THE FIRST REPORT OF THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS*

August, 1895

ITS FOUNDATION

During the month of July in the year 1894 the Natal Government introduced a bill called the Franchise Law Amendment Bill in the Legislative Assembly. It was recognised that it threatened the very existence of the Indians in the Colony. Meetings were held on the premises of Messrs. Dada Abdulla & Co., to consider what steps should be taken to prevent the Bill from passing. Petitions were sent to both the Houses, Members of which were interviewed by a representative who went from Durban to P. M. Burg. The Bill, however, passed both the Houses. The effect of the agitation was that all the Indians recognised the absolute necessity of establishing a permanent institution that would cope with the legislative activity, of a retrograde character, of the first Responsible Government of the Colony with regard to the Indians, and protect Indian interests.

After a few preliminary meetings had been held on Messrs. Dada Abdulla's premises, the Natal Indian Congress was formally established on the 22nd August amidst great enthusiasm. All the leading members of the Indian community joined the Congress. Seventy-six members subscribed on the first evening. The list gradually rose to 228. Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam was elected president. Other prominent members were made vice-presidents. Mr. M. K. Gandhi was elected Hon. Secretary. A small committee, too, was formed. But, as the other members of the Congress expressed a wish to attend the committee meetings during the early days of the Congress, the committee was tacitly abolished and all the members were invited to the meetings.

The minimum monthly subscription was 5/-.[1] There was no maximum limit. Two members subscribed £2 each monthly, one 25/-, ten 20/-, twenty-five 10/-, three 7/6, three 5/3, two 5/1, and one hundred and eighty-seven subscribed 5/- each, monthly. The following table shows the various classes of members with the subscriptions paid by them, the deficiency etc.[2]

Class	No.	Yearly £ s d	Actual receipts	Deficiency
40/-	2	48- 0-0	£ 48- 0-0	Nil
25/-	1	15- 0-0	£ 15- 0-0	Nil
20/-	10	120- 0-0	£ 93- 0-0	£ 27- 0-0
10/-	22	132- 0-0	£ 88- 5-0	£ 43-15-0
7/6	3	13-10-0	£ 8-12-6	£ 4-17-6
5/3	2	6- 6-0	£ 3- 8-3	£ 2-17-9
5/1	2	6- 2-0	£ 5- 6-9	£ 0-15-3
5/-	187	559-10-0	£273- 5-0	£286-15-0
	228	900- 8-0	£ 535-17-6	£ 366- 0-6

It will be seen from the above that, out of a possible income of £900-8-0, the Congress has been so far successful in collecting only £500-17-6 or nearly 59%. The 5/-subscribers have been the greatest defaulters. The causes are many. It should be borne in mind that some joined at a very late stage and, naturally, have not paid for the whole year. Many have left for India, a few are too poor to pay. The most potent cause, however, it is regrettable to mention, has been the unwillingness to pay. It is possible to collect over 30% of the remainder if some workers came forward and exerted themselves. The

1 Shillings.

2 The totals are not all correct, due perhaps to oversight.

following is a list[1] of donations, general and special, for the Bennett case, as also the subscriptions from Newcastle and Charlestown.

The list has been given in full because these names do not appear on the printed lists. Thus the total receipts are:

Subscriptions	£535-17-6
Donations	£ 80-17-0
	£616-14-6

The above is worked on the basis of the printed list.

Now the deposits in the Bank amount to £598-19-11. In order to arrive at the above sum the cash expenses and the transfers have to be added.

The cash expenses are £7-5-1. The transfers amount to £10-10-0, being £8, rent to Mr. Naidoo which was remitted in lieu of subscriptions, £2, rent not charged by Mr. Abdul Kadir and 10/-, rent not charged by Mr. Moosa H. Adam in lieu of his subscription.

Thus	£598-19-11
	£ 7- 5- 1
	£ 10-10- 0
	£616-15- 0

Thus, on comparing the deposits with the printed list, we have a difference of six pence which represent 6d received but not specified in the list. This happens because one member once paid 2/6 and another time 3/-. The 3/- could not be well represented on the list.

The expenses by cheque up to date amount to £151-11-1½. A full statement[1] is annexed hereto. This leaves a credit balance at the Bank of £447-8-9½. The liabilities are not yet discharged and the expenses of the Immigration petition and the tickets referred to below.

[1] The list and the statement under reference have been omitted.

The rules as to drawing cheques have been strictly adhered to. Although the Hon. Secy. has the power to sign cheques, alone, up to £5, the power has never been availed of. They are signed by him and Mr. Abdul Karim and, in his absence, by Mr. Dorasamy Pillay and Mr. P. Dowji and, in his absence, by Mr. Hoosan Cassim.

THE CONGRESS ACTIVITY:
ITS WORK, ITS WORKERS AND ITS TROUBLES

To take the last first, the Congress has passed through quite enough of troubles. It was early seen that the collection of subscriptions was an uphill task. Various suggestions were put forward, but none proved absolutely successful. At last some workers volunteered and, as a result of their labours, it is possible to show a balance of even £448. Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, Mr. Abdul Kadir, Mr. Abdul Karim, Mr. Dorasamy, Mr. Dowji Kathrada, Mr. Randeri, Mr. Hoosen Cassim, Mr. Peerun Mahomed, Mr. G. H. Miankhan and Mr. Amod Jeewa have, at one time or another, striven to get in the subscriptions. All, or most of them, more than once went round for subscriptions. Mr. Abdul Kadir alone, at his own expense, went to P.M. Burg and collected nearly £50, but for which most of the sum might have been lost to the Congress. Mr. Abdul Karim at his expense went up to Verulam and collected nearly £25.

There was also a difference among the prominent members as to signing the cheques. The rule originally was to have them signed by the Hon. Secy. and countersigned by one of the following: Mr. Abdulla H. Adam, Mr. Moosa Haji Cassim, Mr. P. Dowji Mahomed, Mr. Hoosen Cassim, Mr. Abdul Kadir and Mr. Dorasamy Pillay. A suggestion was made that more should sign. At one time this difference threatened the very existence of the Congress, but the good sense of the members and their anxiety to prevent such a catastrophe ultimately

dispelled the cloud. And the change above mentioned was agreed to unanimously.

As soon as the Congress was fairly started in Durban, Messrs. Dowd Mahomed, Moosa Haji Adam, Mahomed Cassim Jeeva, Mr. Parsee Rustomjee, Mr. Peerun Mahomed and the Hon. Secy. went up, each at his own expense, to canvass for members in P. M. Burg. A meeting was held there and about 48 subscribed. A second similar meeting was held at Verulam where about 37 subscribed. Mr. Hoosan Cassim, Mr. Haji, Mr. Dowd, Mr. Moosa Haji Cassim, Mr. Parsee Rustomji and the Hon. Secy. went up there. Messrs. Amod Bhayat, Haji Mahomed and Camroodeen rendered active help in P. M. Burg and Messrs. Ebrahim Moosaji Amod, Amod Meter and P. Naidoo, in Verulam.

Mr. Ameerodeen, although not a member of the Congress, did much needed work for the Congress. Mr. N. D. Joshi has been good enough to make a fair copy of the report in Gujarati.

Mr. Somasundram, in the earlier part of the Congress year, helped it by interpreting at the meetings and distributing circulars. Work has also been done in Newcastle and Charlestown. Members have subscribed for the second year.

Mr. Mahomed Sidat and Mr. Suliman Ebrahim and Mr. Mahomed Meer worked indefatigably in Newcastle. They and Mr. Dowd Amla went also to Charlestown at their expense. The Charlestown people responded splendidly. Within an hour all the available men subscribed. Mr. Dindar, Mr. Goolam Russul and Mr. Vanda rendered much help. Nearly 1,000 letters have been written to the friends of the Indians in England and India in connection with the Franchise petition, Transvaal petition and the Immigration petition to the Home Government.

The Immigration law, which contemplates imposition of a £3 tax in lieu of indenture, has been strenuously

opposed. Petitions were presented to both the Houses.

The Transvaal petition, though not sent directly under the auspices of the Congress, cannot but be referred to in a review of the Congress work.

According to the spirit or the object of the Congress, an open letter was written to members of both the Houses and widely circulated in the Colony and South Africa. It was widely noticed by the papers and gave rise to much sympathetic private correspondence. Letters, too, occasionally appeared in the newspapers on the position of the Indians in Natal. A correspondence was carried on by the late President with the Government in connection with the separate entrances for the Europeans and Natives and Asiatics at the Post Office.

The result has not been altogether unsatisfactory. Separate entrances will now be provided for the three communities. Work has also been done among the indentured Indians. Balasundram, who was badly treated by his master, was transferred to Mr. Askew.

The Congress interfered on behalf of the indentured Indians in the Railway department, in connection with the Mohorrum festivals as well as supply of wood instead of coal. Much sympathy was shown by the Magistrate presiding.

The Tuohy case is also worthy of mention. Judgement was recorded for Ismail Amod whose hat was taken off forcibly in a public place and, who was otherwise ill-treated.

The famous Bennett case cost the Congress a great deal, but it is believed that the money has not been thrown away. That we should not get judgement against the Magistrate was a foregone conclusion. We went to court inspite of Mr. Morecom's opinion to the contrary. It has, however, made the position much clearer and we know exactly what we should do should a similar case occur in future.

While the Indian cause has not received much active

support from the Europeans in the Colony, much sympathy has been evoked both in India and England. The London *Times* and *The Times of India* have actively supported the Indians in South Africa. The British Committee of the National Congress has been very vigilant. Letters of sympathy have been received from Sir W. W. Hunter, M. A. Webb, the Hon. Pherozeshah Mehta, the Hon. Fazalbhai Visram and others. Other Indian and English papers have also viewed our complaints favourably.

Mr. Askew was the only European who attended the Congress meetings. The Congress has not yet made itself officially known to the public because it was thought advisable not to do so unless it was assured of a permanent existence. It has worked very quietly.

This review of the work of the Congress may close fittingly with a mention of the address that was presented to Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam, the late President, on his departure for India.

GIFTS TO THE CONGRESS

These have been quite varied and numerous. Mr. Parsee Rustomji stands foremost in this respect. He has supplied it with three lamps, tablecloth, a clock, a door-blind, inkstands, pens, blotting, flower-pot and also oil throughout the year. He has sent his men to sweep and light the hall on every meeting-day with extraordinary punctuality. He has also supplied the Congress with 4,000 circulars. Mr. Abdul Kadir had the list of members printed.

Mr. C. M. Jeewa had 2,000 circulars printed gratis, paper for which was supplied partly by Mr. Haji Mahomed and partly by Mr. Hoosen Cassim.

Mr. Abdulla Haji Adam has made a gift of a carpet. Mr. Manekji provided a table.

Mr. Pragji Bhimbhai gave 1,000 envelopes.

The Hon. Secretary got the rules printed in India in Gujarati and English and supplied stamps, papers etc.,

for the normal fortnightly circulars.

Mr. Lawrence, a non-member, has been doing the work of distributing circulars with quiet zeal.

MISCELLANEOUS

The attendance has been very poor and painfully unpunctual. The Tamil members have not shown much zeal in the Congress work. They might, at any rate, have made up for the laxity in paying by attending punctually and regularly. In order to facilitate canvassing for small donations, tickets for one shilling, two shillings and two shillings and sixpence, initialled by Mr. A. H. Adam, Mr. Abdul Kadir, Mr. D. Pillay and the Hon. Secy., have been issued, but no forecast can yet be made as to the results of the plan.

A resolution has also been passed to the effect that medals should be awarded to active workers in order to encourage them. They have not yet been prepared.

DEATH AND DEPARTURE

It has to be noted with regret that Mr. Dinsha died a few months ago.

About 10 members have left for India, among whom may be mentioned, besides the late president, Mr. Haji Mahomed, Mr. Haji Suliman, Mr. Haji Dada, Mr. Manekji. Mr. Mutukrishna and Mr. Ranjitsing have resigned.

About 20 members never paid any subscription at all, who also may be considered as having never joined the Congress.

SUGGESTIONS

The most important suggestion that has to be made is that, whatever the subscription, it must be made payable for the whole year in advance.

It should be noted that some expenses though voted by the Congress have not been incurred. Economy has been strictly observed. At least £2,000 are needed to put the Congress on a sure foundation.

From a copy in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya.

58. *THE INDIAN FRANCHISE*

DURBAN,
September 2, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

Sir,

I would take the liberty to make a few remarks on your leaderettes on the recent cables about the Indians in South Africa. It is not for the first time that you have said that the people in South Africa object to give the Indians equal political rights because they do not enjoy them in India, and that you would not object to give them the same rights as they enjoy in India. As I have said elsewhere, I repeat here that, in theory at any rate, the Indians do enjoy equal political rights with the Europeans in India. The Charter of 1833 and the Proclamation of 1858 guarantee the Indians the same rights and privileges as are enjoyed by Her Majesty's other subjects. And the Indians in this Colony, as well as in other parts of South Africa, would be quite satisfied if they could only enjoy the same rights that they would enjoy under similar circumstances.

In India, whenever the Europeans are allowed to vote, the Indians are not excluded. If the former have votes at the municipal elections, so have the latter. If the former can elect or become elected members of the Legis-

lative Council, so can the latter. If the former can walk about freely after 9 p.m., so can the latter. The latter cannot possess themselves with arms as freely as the former. The Indians in South Africa also have no very great anxiety to arm themselves. There is no poll-tax in India. Will you be good enough to protest against the recent Immigration Act and earn the gratitude of the helpless indentured Indians? It is the same recognised principle of political equality that enabled Mr. Naoroji to enter the House of Commons.

If you object to the Indian having the same rights because "British energy and money" have built up this Colony, you should clearly object to the Germans and the French also. On the same principle, the descendants of the pioneers who shed their blood may well object to even those coming from England and pushing them out. Is this not a narrow and selfish view of the matter? At times I read in your leaders expressions of very lofty and humanitarian sentiments. Unfortunately for the poor Indian, these sentiments are set aside when you deal with the Indian question. And yet, whether you like it or not, he is your fellow-subject. England does not want to let go her hold of India, and at the same time she does not want to rule her with an iron rod. Her statesmen say that they want so much to endear the English rule to the Indians that they would not have any other. Would not views such as those expressed by you retard the fulfilment of those wishes?

I know very few Indians who, though they may be earning £1,000, live as if they were earning only £50. The fact is that, perhaps, there is no Indian in the Colony who alone earns £1,000 per year. There are some whose trade would lead others to believe that they must be "making a pile". The trade of some of them is certainly very large; not so the profit, because it is shared by many. The Indian loves trade, and so long as he can

earn a decent living, he does not mind sharing his profit largely with others. He does not insist upon the lion's share. Just like the European, the Indian also loves spending his money, only not so recklessly. Every merchant who has amassed a fortune in Bombay has built for himself palatial buildings. The only palatial building in Mombassa has been built by an Indian. Indian merchants have earned much in Zanzibar, and consequently have built palaces, and, in some instances, pleasure houses also. If no Indian has done so in Durban or South Africa it is because he has not earned sufficient to enable him so to do. Sir, if you will only study the question a little more closely (pardon me for so saying), you will find that the Indians spend in this Colony quite as much as they can without coming to grief. To say that those earning well sleep on the floors of their shops is, I venture to say, rather incorrect. If you would undeceive yourself, and if you will leave your editorial chair for a few hours, I would escort you to some Indian stores. Then, perhaps, you would think much less harshly of them than now.

I humbly believe that the Indian question, at any rate for the British Colonies, has a local as well as Imperial significance, and I submit that to lose temper over it, or to shut one's eyes to actual facts, in order to form preconceived ideas, is not exactly the way to solve it satisfactorily. It behoves responsible persons in the Colony not to widen the gulf between the two communities, but, if possible, to bridge it. Having invited the Indians to the Colony, how can the responsible Colonists curse them? How can they escape the natural consequences of the introduction of the Indian labour?

I am, &c.,

M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 5-9-1895

59. *THE INDIAN FRANCHISE*

Controverting Gandhiji's plea for granting the franchise to Indians in South Africa, Mr. T. Marston Francis, who had lived several years in India, wrote to The Natal Mercury *on September 6, 1895, that though Indians in India could vote at municipal elections and become members of the Legislative Council, things were so constituted that they could never outvote the European members or arrogate to themselves supreme authority. The chairman of a municipality, he said, was always a covenanted officer of the Indian Civil Service, and the Commissioner of the Division, the Governor, the Viceroy, the Secretary of State for India, and ultimately the British Parliament could impose checks on the municipalities and legislative bodies of India. To this Gandhiji replied as follows:*

DURBAN,
September 15, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

I would venture to make a few remarks in reply to Mr. T. Marston Francis's letter on the Indian question.

I believe your correspondent's description of the Indian municipalities, as also of the Legislative Councils, is not quite accurate. To mention only one instance, I do not think that the chairman of an Indian municipality must be a covenanted civilian. The present president of the Bombay Corporation is an Indian solicitor.

I have never contended—nor do I contend now—that the franchise is as extensive in India as it is here. It would also be idle for me to say that the Legislative Councils in India are as representative as the Legislative

Assembly here. What I do contend, however, is that, whatever the limits of the franchise in India, it is extended to all without distinction of colour. The fact that the Indian's ability to understand representative government has been recognised cannot be gainsaid. What Mr. Francis says, viz., that the qualifications for the franchise are not the same in India as in Natal, has never been denied. Under such a test no one coming from even Europe would be entitled to the franchise, for the qualifications in the different European States are not surely the same as here.

This week's mail brings the latest proof that the Indians have never failed in the real and only test, viz., whether or not they understand the principle of representation. I quote from the article on "Indian Affairs" in *The Times:*

> But if the gallantry of the native soldiers who obtained recognition stirs within us a pride in having such fellow subjects. . . . Indeed, nothing could exceed their magnificent self-devotion to their comrades in that deadly pass. . . . The truth is that the Indians are earning the right to be regarded as worthy fellow subjects in more ways than one. The battle-field has always formed the short cut to an honourable equality among races. But the Indians are also proving their title to our respect by the slower and more difficult methods of civil life. There never was a greater experiment made in the constitutional government of dependencies than the expansion of the Indian Legislative Council on a partially elective basis three years ago. . . Many of the discussions have been most helpful, and so far as Bengal is concerned—the province in which the elective system seemed fraught with the greatest difficulty—the experiment, after a severe trial, has proved a success.

This, as is well known, is from the pen of a historian[1] and Indian officer who has served in India for 30 years. Disfranchisement by itself may seem to some to be very insignificant. But its consequences to the Indian community are too dreadful to contemplate. Its corresponding advantages to the European Colonists, I am convinced,

1 Sir W. W. Hunter; *vide* p. 259, *infra*.

are *nil*, unless there be anything gratifying in degrading or keeping under degradation a race or nation. There is no question of "the white man or the yellow man ruling", and I hope to be able to show, on a future occasion, that the fears entertained on that score are entirely groundless.

There are passages in Mr. Francis's letter which would, perhaps, show that he must have left India very long ago. There are very few posts more responsible than that of a civil commissioner, and yet the Secretary of State for India only recently thought it prudent to appoint an Indian to that post. Mr. Francis knows what jurisdiction a Chief Justice in India enjoys, and an Indian has occupied that position both in Bengal and Madras. Those who wish to bind the two races—the British and the Indian—with "the silken cord of love" will not find it difficult to notice innumerable points of contact between the two. Even the three religions of the two, in spite of their apparent antagonism, have much in common, and would not form a bad unity in trinity.

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 23-9-1895

60. THE INDIAN CONGRESS

DURBAN,
September 23, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser

SIR,

Your remarks in your Saturday's issue on the "Indian Congress", or more correctly, "The Natal Indian Congress",

are premature, seeing that the case[1] in which the name has been used is not yet over. Were I not afraid of running the risk of committing contempt of court I would make a few remarks on the circumstances under which the Congress has been connected with the case. I am, therefore, obliged to postpone any remarks on the matter till the case is over.

In the meanwhile, in order to remove any misimpression your remarks may create, I would, with your kind permission, set out the objects of the Congress. They are:

"(1) To bring about a better understanding, and to promote friendliness between the Europeans and the Indians residing in the Colony.

"(2) To spread information about India and the Indians by writing to newspapers, publishing pamphlets, lecturing etc.

"(3) To educate the Indians, especially [those] born in the Colony, about Indian History, and induce them to study Indian subjects.

"(4) To ascertain the various grievances the Indians are labouring under, and to agitate by resorting to all constitutional methods for removing them.

"(5) To enquire into the condition of the indentured Indians and to help them out of special hardships.

"(6) To help the poor and the needy in all reasonable ways.

[1] The Natal Indian Congress leaders were said to have had a hand in intimidating an Indian witness from giving evidence in a trial for assault. The charge was actually against Padayachi, a member of the Natal Indian Congress, but it was stated that he did so at the instigation of leaders of the Congress. It was further alleged that under Gandhiji's leadership the Congress was conspiring to fight the Government, that it set up Indian labourers to agitate against their grievances, that Gandhiji extracted money from them and from Indian traders promising to help them obtain relief and used the funds for his own purposes. See also Gandhiji's letter to the Colonial Secretary, dated October 21, 1895, pp. 250-3, *infra*.

"(7) And generally to do everything that would tend to put the Indians on a better footing morally, socially, intellectually, and politically."

The very constitution of the Congress prevented it from dealing with private grievances, unless they have a public significance.

To say that "It has been quite through accident that the existence of the 'Indian Congress' has been discovered" is hardly in accordance with known facts. While the Congress was yet in process of formation, *The Natal Witness* announced the fact, and, if I am not mistaken, the paragraph announcing it was copied by you. It is true that it has not been officially made known before. This was not done because its organizers were not, and are not yet, sure of its permanent existence. They thought it prudent to let time alone bring it to the public notice. No attempts have been made to keep it secret. On the other hand, its organizers even invited those Europeans who were considered to be sympathetic either to join it or attend its fortnightly meetings. It is only because it has begun to be misrepresented in private conversation, and has now been publicly misrepresented (no doubt unconsciously) by you, that the above explanation has been deemed necessary.

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI
HON. SEC.,
THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

PS. For your information I enclose copies of the rules, the list of members during its first year, and the first annual report.

M. K. G.

The Natal Advertiser, 21-9-1895

61. THE INDIAN CONGRESS

A correspondent, "H", *wrote on September 21, 1895, to* The Natal Mercury *referring to a report that a member of the Civil Service, an Indian interpreter in a magistrate's court, was behind the Congress and its work.* "H" *demanded that he should be prevented from doing such "mischief". Gandhiji replied thus:*

DURBAN,
September 25, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

Your correspondent "H" has evidently been misinformed as to the genesis of the Natal Indian Congress, as also with regard to other matters. The Congress was formed chiefly by the efforts of Mr. Abdulla Hajee Adam. I have been present at all the meetings of the Congress, and I know that no Civil Servant has taken part in any of the meetings. The responsibility for drafting the rules and the several memorials rests entirely on my shoulders. No one Civil Servant even saw the memorials before they were printed and ready for distribution among the Congress members and others.

M. K. GANDHI
HON. SEC., N.I.C.

The Natal Mercury, 27-9-1895

62. THE INDIAN CONGRESS

"H" *again wrote to* The Natal Mercury *on September 28, 1895, saying that the Congress was secretly organized by a Civil Servant, and that Gandhiji was being paid £300 per annum for his work as Secretary. To this Gandhiji replied:*

DURBAN,
September 30, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

Were the matter referred to in "H" 's letter in your Saturday issue concerning myself only, I would not have taken any notice, but as his letter affects Civil Servants I am obliged to trespass further upon your courtesy. I am not a paid Secretary of the Congress. On the other hand, in common with other members, I also contribute my humble share to its funds. No one pays me anything whatever on behalf of the Congress. Some Indians do pay me yearly retainers. They are paid to me directly. There is nothing that the Congress has to conceal; only it does not blow its own trumpet. Any enquiries about it, whether public or private, will be answered as promptly as possible. I beg to enclose herewith some papers in connection with the Congress which would throw some light on its working.

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI
HON. SEC., N.I.C.

The Natal Mercury, 4-10-1895

63. ADDRESS TO NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

Under the auspices of the Natal Indian Congress Gandhiji addressed a large gathering of Indians, numbering between 800 and 1,000, at Rustomjee's Buildings, Durban, on Sunday, October 1, 1895.

Mr. Gandhi addressed the meeting at great length. He said now that the existence of the Natal Indian Congress had become fully known, it was necessary they should be punctual in paying their subscriptions. They had now £700 in hand, being about £100 more than the last time he met them. They wanted quite £4,000 to meet their requirements, and he said everyone should sign to promise a subscription in a given time; every merchant who sold £100 of goods should endeavour to give 5s. to the Congress.

Mr. Gandhi said they had succeeded so far in England but they were now awaiting the good results which will come from India. It was very likely that he (Mr. Gandhi) would leave them in January to go to India, and he would then endeavour to persuade a number of good Indian barristers to come to Natal.

The Natal Advertiser, 2-10-1895

64. THE INDIAN QUESTION

DURBAN,
October 9, 1895

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Advertiser

SIR,

No Indian can take exception to the general tenor of your leader in your yesterday's issue.

If the Congress has attempted, even in an indirect manner,

to tamper with a witness, it will certainly deserve suppression. I will, for the present, content myself with repeating the statement that it has not made any such attempt. As the judgment in which the Congress has been condemned is under appeal, I do not feel free to deal with the evidence at length. The only witness who was asked questions about the Congress denied that it had anything to do with the matter. If the doings of men in their private capacity were to be fathered upon the association they may belong to, then I venture to think that almost any charge could be proved against any association.

The Indians do not claim "one Indian one vote", nor is any vote claimed for the "coolie" pure and simple. But then the "coolie" pure and simple, so long as he remains one, cannot get it even under the existing law. The protest is only against colour or racial distinction. If the whole question were studied coolly there would be no occasion for any display of bad feeling or warmth by anybody.

The Indians have in no part of the world attempted to gain political supremacy. In Mauritius, where they are in such large numbers, they are said to have shown no political ambition. And they are not likely to do so in Natal, even though they may number 400,000 instead of 40,000.

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Advertiser, 10-10-1895

65. *THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS*

DURBAN,
October 21, 1895

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, P.M.BURG

SIR,

Certain remarks in the newspapers and the judgment of the Durban Resident Magistrate in *Regina vs. Rungasamy*

Padayachi recently tried before him render it necessary for me to write to you, in my capacity as Honorary Secretary for the Congress, in connection with the remarks and the judgment referred to above.

The judgment lays down that the Congress summoned an Indian named Asgara before it on a certain day in August and attempted to intimidate him from giving evidence in a case, and that it is an association of conspiracy, etc.

I have to submit that not only has the Congress never summoned the above-named person or any other person before it with a view to prevent him from giving evidence, but that the presiding magistrate had absolutely no grounds for making such remarks.

The judgment in which the remarks occur is under appeal. That has prevented me from dealing with the matter at any length in the press. Unfortunately, the remarks being merely *obiter dicta* of the Magistrate, may not be fully dealt with by the judges. During the examination, cross-examination and re-examination of the witness Asgara, the Congress was not even so much as mentioned. After the re-examination was finished, the Magistrate asked the witness questions about the Congress. It was made clear from the questions and answers that there was no meeting of the Congress during the week during which the intimidation is supposed to have taken place. Two printed circulars were produced, one of which was dated the 14th August, the other 12th September, inviting members of the Congress to attend the meetings on the Tuesdays following the prospective dates, i.e., on the 20th August and 17th September.

The intimidation was alleged to have happened on the 12th August. The witness is said to have been sent for by Mahomed Camroodeen to Moosa's office that day, where there were present M. C. Camroodeen, Dada Abdulla, Dowd Mahomed and two or three strangers. Here, it is alleged, he was asked certain questions about the case.

And this the Magistrate has connected with the Congress, in spite of the witness's evidence to the effect that the Congress meetings are not held in Moosa's office, that there was no circular inviting him to the meeting at Moosa's office, that he did not attend the meetings convened in terms of the circulars, that the Congress meetings are held in the Congress Hall, that the circulars had nothing to do with the case, and that he was not present at the actual Congress meetings.

The only point that could in any way be used to support the Magistrate's conclusions was the fact that three out of the six or seven men alleged to have been present at Moosa's office were members of the Congress.

I beg to enclose herewith the extracts from the evidence bearing on the matter.

I venture to submit that, in some way or other, the Magistrate was biased. In the case of Poonoosamy Pather and three others, without a particle of evidence, he has remarked in his reasons for judgment that the defendants are members of and have been backed up by the Congress. As a matter of fact, all of them are not members of the Congress and the Congress had nothing whatever to do with the matter. As a great deal has been made of my instructing Mr. Millar in the Rungasamy case, I may mention that I had no connection whatever with the case of Poonoosamy and others, nor did I know, till after the case had far advanced towards the final stage, that there was such a case at all. My intervention was sought when Rungasamy was charged for the same offence for the second time and then, too, not in my capacity as Hon. Secretary of the Congress but as a lawyer.

I beg to assure the Government that the intention of the organizers of the Congress is to make the Congress an institution useful to both the communities in the Colony and a medium of interpretation of the feelings of the Indians on questions affecting them, and thus to help the existing

Government and not to embarrass it, if it could embarrass it at all.

Holding such views, they naturally resent any remarks made about the Congress that may curtail its usefulness. Nothing, therefore, will be more welcome to the members of the Congress than a thorough enquiry as to its Constitution and working, should the Government be inclined to attach any weight to the Magistrate's remarks.

I may state that the Congress has never yet interfered in any court matters between Indians and Indians and has refused to take up private grievances unless they have a public significance. No individual member or members can do anything on behalf of, or in the name of, the Congress without the sanction of a majority of the members of the Congress assembled in accordance with the rules of the Congress, which can only meet on a written notification from the Honorary Secretary.

If the Government are satisfied that the Congress had nothing to do with the case in question, I, on behalf of the Congress, humbly beg to ask for some public notification of the fact; if, on the other hand, there be any doubt as to the matter I venture to ask for an enquiry.

I beg to enclose herewith a copy each of Congress rules, the list of members for the year ending 22nd August, 1895, and the first Annual Report.

I shall be very happy to supply any further information that may be required.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

your obedient servant,

(Signed) M. K. GANDHI

HON. SEC., N.I.C.

Enclosure No. 1 in Desptach No. 128 of 30th November, 1895, from the Governor of Natal to H.M.'s Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 192.

66. *MEMORIAL TO MR. CHAMBERLAIN*

JOHANNESBURG,
S.A.R.
November 26, 1895

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES, LONDON

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIAN BRITISH SUBJECTS RESIDING IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Memorialists, representing the Indian community in the South African Republic, hereby venture respectfully to approach Her Majesty's Government with regard to the resolution passed by the Honourable Volksraad of the South African Republic on 7th October, 1895, ratifying the treaty entered into between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the South African Republic exempting all British subjects residing in the Republic from personal military service with the reservation that "by British subjects" shall be understood "White persons".

Your Memorialists, on reading this resolution, ventured to telegraph to you on 22nd October, 1895, protesting against the distinction made between White and coloured British subjects.

The reservation is evidently aimed at the Indian British subjects residing in the South African Republic.

Your Memorialists would draw your attention to the fact that the treaty itself does not qualify the words "British subjects" at all, and submit that the resolution, instead of

accepting the treaty *in toto*, modifies it and on that ground alone your Memorialists feel sure the modified ratification will not be accepted by Her Majesty's Government.

Your Memorialists will not dwell upon the indignity to which the resolution unnecessarily subjects the Indians.

The reason put forward for exemption of British subjects from commando was chiefly that, as the British subjects were not entitled to full Burgher rights and were subjected to disabilities in the Republic, they should not be compelled to render military service with the Burghers. It was openly avowed at the time the commotion was going on that the Uitlander population of the Republic would gladly serve in the Malaboch campaign, if only they were treated as citizens and given the Franchise.

If, therefore, the European or, as the resolution puts it, "White" British subjects should be exempt because of the political disabilities they labour under, much more, it is respectfully submitted, should the Indian British subjects, who not only do not enjoy any political rights in the South African Republic but are treated as little more than chattels, of which fact the resolution is another indication.

Your Memorialists, in conclusion, earnestly pray and confidently hope, that in view of the general persecution that is incessantly being meted out to the Indians throughout South Africa, whether in the Colonies or in the Independent States (even in the newly opened-up territories of Bulawayo and other parts), and in view of the magnitude of the already existing restrictions placed upon the Indians in South Africa generally and your Memorialists' and their fellow brothers' attempts to get them removed by the intervention of Her Majesty's Government, this fresh attempt to yet further restrict the freedom of the Indians on the part of the Government of the South African Republic will not be countenanced by Her Majesty's Government.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray etc. etc.

M. C. CAMROODEEN
ABDOOL GANI
MAHOMED ISMAEL
ETC. ETC.

Enclosure in Despatch No. 692 of 10 December, 1895, from H.M.'s High Commissioner to the South African Republic to H. M.'s Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Colonial Office Records No. 417, Vol. 152.

67. THE INDIAN FRANCHISE

AN APPEAL TO EVERY BRITON IN SOUTH AFRICA

BEECH GROVE, DURBAN,
December 16, 1895

The question of Indian Franchise has convulsed the whole Colony, indeed the whole of South Africa, so far as the newspapers are concerned. This appeal, therefore, needs no apology. It is an attempt to place before every Briton in South Africa, as shortly as possible, an Indian view of the Indian Franchise.

Some of the arguments in favour of the disfranchisement of the Indians are:

(1) The Indians do not enjoy the franchise in India.
(2) The Indian in South Africa represents the lowest-class Indian; in fact, he is the scum of India.
(3) The Indian does not understand what the franchise is.
(4) The Indian should not get the franchise because the Native, who is as much a British subject as the Indian, has none.
(5) The Indians should be disfranchised in the interests of the Native population.
(6) This Colony shall be and remain a White man's

country, and not a black man's; and the Indian franchise will simply swamp the European vote, and give the Indian political supremacy.

I shall take the objections *seriatim.*

I

It has been said over and over again that the Indian cannot and must not claim higher privileges than he enjoys in India, and that he has no franchise whatever in India.

Now, the Indian in the first place does not claim any higher privileges than he enjoys in India. It should be borne in mind that the Government in India is not of the same type as here. Therefore, it is obvious there cannot be any analogy between the two. It might be said in answer to this that the Indians should wait till they get the same kind of Government in India. This answer, however, will not do. On the same principle, it can be argued that no man coming to Natal could get the franchise unless he enjoyed the franchise in the country he came from in the same way and under the same circumstances, i.e., unless the Franchise Law of that country was the same as that of Natal. If such a doctrine were to be of universal application, it is easy to see that no one coming from England even could get the franchise in Natal, for the Franchise Law there is not the same as in Natal, much less could a man coming from Germany or Russia, where a more or less autocratic Government prevails. The only and real test, therefore, is not whether the Indians have the franchise in India, but whether they understand the principle of representative Government.

But they *have* the franchise in India, extremely limited it is true; nevertheless it is there. The Legislative Councils recognise the ability of the Indian to understand and appreciate representative Government. They are a standing testimony to the Indian's fitness for representative

institutions. Members of Indian Legislative Councils are partly elected and partly nominated. The position of the Legislative Councils in India is not very unlike that of the late Legislative Council of Natal. And the Indians are not debarred from entering those Councils. They compete on the same terms with the Europeans.

At the last election of Members for the Legislative Council of Bombay, the candidates for one of the constituencies were a European and an Indian.

There are Indian Members in all the Legislative Councils in India. Indians vote at these elections as well as the Europeans. The franchise is certainly limited. It is also circuitous, as for example: the Corporation of Bombay elects one Member to the Legislative Council, and the Corporation consists of Members elected by the ratepayers, mostly Indian.

There are thousands of Indian voters for municipal elections in Bombay from which class, or a class similar to which, are drawn most of the Indian traders in the Colony.

Furthermore, posts of the utmost importance are thrown open to the Indians. Does that show as if they were considered unfit to understand representative Government? An Indian has been a Chief Justice—an office that carries with it a salary of 60,000 rupees or £6,000 per year. Only recently an Indian, belonging to the class which most of the traders belong to here, has been appointed Puisne Judge in the High Court of Judicature at Bombay.

A Tamil gentleman, to whose caste belong some of the indentured Indians, is a Puisne Judge of the High Court at Madras. An Indian has been entrusted with the very responsible duties of a Civil Commissioner in Bengal.

Indians have occupied the Vice-Chancellor's chair at Calcutta and Bombay.

Indians compete for the Civil Service on the same terms as the Europeans.

The present President of the Bombay Corporation is an

Indian elected by the Members of the Corporation.

The latest testimony to the Indian's fitness for an equality with the civilized races comes from the London *Times* of 23rd August, 1895.

The writer of "Indian Affairs" in *The Times* who, it is well known, is no other than Sir William Wilson Hunter, perhaps the most eminent Indian historian, says:

> Of the acts of daring and of the even more splendid examples of endurance by which those honours were won, it is difficult to read without a thrill of admiration. One Sepoy who received the Order of Merit has had no fewer than thirty-one wounds, 'probably', says the *Indian Daily News*, 'a record number'. Another, shot in the defile where Ross's party was cut up, quietly felt out the bullet in his body and with both hands forced it, fearless of the agony, to the surface. When at last he could get it between his fingers he pulled it out, and then, streaming with blood, he shouldered his rifle again and did a march of twenty-one miles.
>
> But if the gallantry of the native soldiers who obtained recognition stir within us a pride in having such fellow-subjects, the paltry rewards doled forth in cases of equal pluck and steadfastness awaken very different feelings. Two water carriers of the 4th Bengal Infantry were singled out in the dispatches 'for the gallantry and devotion exhibited by them during the action at Koragh'. Indeed, nothing could exceed their magnificent self-devotion to their comrades in that deadly pass. Another man of the same regiment was mentioned for 'the conspicuous gallantry and devotion exhibited' while with the party which brought the late Captain Baird into Chitral fort. . . . The truth is that the Indians are earning the right to be regarded as worthy fellow-subjects in more ways than one. The battlefield has always formed the short cut to an honourable equality among races. But the Indians are also proving their title to our respect by the slower and more difficult methods of civil life. *There never was a greater experiment made in the constitutional government of dependencies than the expansion of the Indian Legislative Councils on a partially elective basis three years ago.* (The italics are mine) Nor in any part of India did the issue of that experiment seem more doubtful than in Bengal. The Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal contains a population numerically equal to that of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies put together, and from an administrative point of view much more difficult to manage.
>
> Sir Charles Elliott bears generous testimony not only to the

absence of factious opposition but to the valuable practical aid which he has obtained in maturing this nesessarily complex measure (The Bengal Sanitary Drainage Act) from his Legislature as expanded by Lord Salisbury's Statute. Many of the discussions have been most helpful, and so far as Bengal is concerned—the province in which the elective system seemed fraught with the greatest difficulty—*the experiment, after a severe trial, has proved a success.*
(The italics are again mine)

II

The second objection is that the Indian in South Africa represents the lowest-class Indian. The statement is hardly correct. It will not, of course, be true as regards the trading community, nor will it be so as to all the indentured Indians, some of whom belong to the highest castes in India. They are certainly all very poor. Some of them were vagabonds in India. Many also belong to the lowest class. But I may be permitted to say without giving any offence that, if the Indian community in Natal is not, nor is the European community here, drawn from the highest class. But I venture to submit that undue importance is given to this fact. If the Indian is not a model Indian, it is the duty of the Government to help him to become one. And if the reader wishes to know what a model Indian is, I beg to refer him to my "Open Letter" where many authorities are collected to show that he is as much civilized as a "model" European. And just as it is competent for a lowest-class European to rise to the highest level in Europe, so is it for the lowest-class Indian in India. By persistent indifference, or retrogressive legislation, the Indian would be degraded lower still in the Colony, and thus may constitute a real danger which he was not before. Shunned, despised, cursed, he will only do and be what others in similar positions have done and been. Loved and well treated, he is capable of rising higher like any member of every other nationality. He cannot be said to be well treated so long as he is not even

given those privileges which he enjoys or would enjoy in India under similar circumstances.

III

To say that the Indian does not understand the Franchise is to ignore the whole history of India. Representation, in the truest sense of the term, the Indian has understood and appreciated from the earliest ages. That principle—the *Panchayat*—guides all the actions of an Indian. He considers himself a member of the *Panchayat*, which really is the whole body civic to which he belongs for the time being. That power to do so — that power to understand thoroughly the principle of popular government — has rendered him the most harmless and most docile man on earth. Centuries of foreign rule and oppression have failed to make him a dangerous member of society. Wherever he goes, and under whatever conditions he is placed, he bows to the decision of the majority represented by those in authority over him. For, he knows no one can be in authority over him, unless he is tolerated there by a majority of the body to which he belongs. This principle is so ingrained in the Indian heart that even the most despotic princes of the Indian States feel that they are to rule for the people. It is true that they do not all act up to that principle. The causes need not be discussed here. And the most astounding fact is that, even when nominally there is a monarchical government, the *Panchayat* is the supreme body. The actions of its members are regulated in accordance with the wish of the majority. For authorities to support my contention I must beg leave to refer the reader to the Franchise petition to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly.

IV

"The Indian should not get the Franchise because the native, who is as much a British subject as the Indian, has none."

I have stated this objection as I find it in the papers. It is at variance with the fact that the Indian already enjoys the Franchise in Natal. An attempt is now being made to disfranchise him.

Without entering into comparisons, I would beg to state what are hard facts. The native franchise is governed by a special law which has been in force for some years. That law does not apply to the Indian. It has not been contended that it should apply to the Indian. The Franchise (whatever it may be) of the Indian in India is not governed by a special law. It applies to all alike. The Indian has his Charter of Liberty, the Proclamation of 1858.

V

The latest argument advanced in favour of disfranchisement is that the Indian franchise would do harm to the native population of the Colony. In what way this will happen is not stated at all. But, I presume, the objectors to the Indian Franchise rely upon the stock objection to the Indian on the alleged ground that he supplies liquor to the natives and this spoils them. Now I venture to submit that the Indian Franchise cannot make any difference one way or the other. If the Indians supply liquor they would not do so to any greater extent because of their vote. The Indian vote can never become sufficiently strong to affect the native policy of the Colony, which is not only jealously watched but to a very great extent controlled by the Downing Street authorities. In fact, even the European Colonists are powerless against Downing Street in this matter. But let us, for a moment, look at facts. The analytical table referred to below, showing the position of the Indian voters already on the List, shows that by far the largest number of them are traders who, it is well known, are not only teetotallers themselves, but would like to see liquor banished altogether from the land, and if the Voters' List continues to remain so, the

effect of that vote, if any, on the native policy will be for the better. But the following extracts from the Indian Immigration Commission, 1885-1887, show that the Indians are not worse than the Europeans in this respect. In quoting them I disclaim any intention to make comparisons, which I have tried to avoid as much as possible. Nor do I wish thereby to excuse my countrymen. No one can regret more than myself to see any Indian found drunk or supplying liquor to natives. I beg to assure the reader that my only wish is to show that the objection to the Indian vote on that particular ground is merely superficial and does not bear scrutiny.

The Commissioners, who were specially commissioned, among other things, to report upon the charge against the Indians of drunkenness and crimes resulting therefrom, at pp. 42 & 43, report thus:

> We have examined many witnesses on this subject. Their evidence and such criminal statistics as are forthcoming fail to convince us that drunkenness and crime resulting therefrom are prevalent amongst Indian immigrants in a greater ratio than amongst other sections of the community, against whom no such restrictive legislation is proposed.
>
> We do not doubt that there is much truth in the averment that natives readily obtain ardent liquors through the agency of Indians. . . .We, however, doubt that they are more guilty in this matter than the White people who traffic in liquor.
>
> It has been shrewdly observed that the people who make the loudest complaints against the Indian immigrants for selling or disposing of liquor to the natives are the very persons who themselves sell the liquor to natives. Their trade is interfered with and their profits are lessened by the competition of Indian liquor traffickers.

What follows the above is instructive reading as showing that, in the opinion of the Commissioners, the Indians in India are free from the habit of drinking and that they learn it here. The question how and why they take to liquor in Natal I leave to the reader to answer.

The Commissioners at page 83 say as follows:

> Although we are convinced that Indians, and especially free Indians in Natal, surrender themselves to the drinking of intoxicating liquors to a greater extent than in their own country, yet we are constrained to record that there is no satisfactory proof before us that the percentage of drunk and disorderly persons is greater amongst them than amongst other races dwelling within the Colony.

Superintendent Alexander says in his evidence before the Commission (p. 146):

> The Indians are to be considered a necessary evil at present; we cannot do without them as labourers; we can do without them as storekeepers; they are as good as the natives; they have very much improved, but the natives have gone down very much; nearly all the thefts are now committed by natives; as far as my experience goes, the natives obtain drink from Indians and from every one else who will supply them; I find some White people as bad as Indians in this way; these are men out of employ, vagrants, who, to gain a sixpence, will supply a native with a bottle of liquor.
>
> In the present condition of Natal I do not think it is possible to substitute a White for an Indian population. I do not think we can. I can deal with 3,000 Indians with the staff that I have, but if there were 3,000 corresponding White British workmen, I could not. . . .

At page 149 he says:

> I find that people generally suspect coolies of doing everything wrong, stealing fowls etc., but I find such is not the case. Out of the last nine cases of fowl-stealing, all of which were laid to my Corporation night-soil coolies, I find that two natives and three White men have been convicted of stealing these fowls.

I would further draw the attention of the readers to the recently issued Native Blue book, and there they will find that almost all the Magistrates are of the opinion that European influences have brought about a change for the worse in the moral character of the natives.

In the face of these incontrovertible facts, is it not rather unfair to impute the blame to the Indians entirely for the native deterioration? In 1893, while there were 28 convictions against Europeans in the Borough for supplying liquor, there were only 3 against Indians.

VI

"This country shall be and remain a White man's country and not a black man's, and the Indian Franchise will simply swamp the European vote and give the Indian the political supremacy in Natal."

With the first part of the statement I do not propose to deal. I confess that I do not even understand it fully. I would, however, try to remove the misconception that underlies the latter part of the statement. I venture to say that the Indian vote can never swamp the European vote, and that the idea of the Indian trying to claim political supremacy is contrary to all past experience. I have had the honour to talk to many Europeans with reference to this question, and almost all have argued upon the assumption that there is "one man one vote" in the Colony. That there is a property qualification was an information to them. I must, therefore, be pardoned for reproducing here the Section of the Franchise Law dealing with the qualification:

> Every man, except as hereafter excepted, above the age of twenty-one years, who possesses an immovable property to the value of £50 or who rents any such property of the yearly value of £10 within any electoral district and who is duly registered in the manner hereinafter mentioned, shall be entitled to vote at the election of a member for such district. When any such property as aforesaid is occupied by more persons than one as proprietors or renters, each of such occupants, being duly registered, shall be entitled to vote in respect of such property, provided the value, or as the case may be, the rent thereof be such as would entitle each of such joint occupants to vote if equally divided among them.

From this it is clear that it is not every Indian who can get the Franchise. And how many Indians are there in the Colony, compared with the Europeans, who have immovable property of the value of £50 or who rent such property of the yearly value of £10? This law has been in force for a long time, and the following table will give some idea of the relative strength of the European and the Indian

Franchise. I have compiled the table from the latest lists published in the *Gazette:*

VOTERS

No.	*Electoral Divisions*	*Europeans*	*Indians*
1	Pietermaritzburg ...	1,521	82
2	Umgeni	306	Nil
3	Lion's River	511	Nil
4	Ixopo	573	3
5	Durban	2,100	143
6	County of Durban ...	779	20
7	Victoria	566	1
8	Umvoti	438	1
9	Weenen	528	Nil
10	Klip River	591	1
11	Newcastle	917	Nil
12	Alexandra	201	"
13	Alfred	278	"
		9,309	251
		Grand Total	9,560

Thus, out of 9,560 registered voters only 251 are Indians. And only two divisions have Indian voters worth mentioning. The proportion of Indian voters to the European, roughly speaking, is 1:38, i.e., the European vote at present is 38 times as strong as the Indian vote. According to the *Report of the Protector of Indian Immigrants for 1895*, out of the total Indian population of 46,343 only 30,303 are free Indians. Adding to this the trading Indian population of, say, 5,000, we have, roughly, 35,000 freed and free Indians. At present, therefore, the Indian population that may compete with the European population as to voting

is not so large as the European. But I believe I am not wide of the mark in saying that more than half of the 35,000 are only a stage higher than the indentured Indians in point of pecuniary circumstances. I have been travelling in the districts surrounding and within 50 miles of Durban, and I may safely venture to assert that most of the Indians who are free are living from hand to mouth and certainly have not immovable property worth £50. Free Indian adults in the Colony number only 12,360. Thus, I submit that the fears as to the Indian vote swamping the European in the near future are entirely groundless.

The following analysis of the Indian Voters' List further shows that most of the Indian voters are those Indians who have settled in the Colony for a very long time; that out of 205 whom I have been able to get identified, only 35 have been at one time indentured Indians, and that they have all been in the Colony for over 15 years.

Table showing the length of residence of the Indian voters and the number of Indian voters who have once been under indenture:

4 years' residence	13
5 to 9 "	50
10 to 13 "	35
14 to 15 "	59
Free Indians who have once been under indenture, but who have been in the Colony over 15, and in many cases over 20 years ..	35
Colonial-born	9
Interpreters	4
Not classified	46
	251

Of course, this table cannot by any means be said to be absolutely correct. I think, however, it is accurate enough for the present purpose. Thus, so far as these

figures go, the Indians who come under indenture take 15 years or more to be able to have sufficient property qualifications to get on the Voters' Roll. And if the freed Indian population were excepted, no one can say that the trading population alone can ever swamp the Voters' Roll. Moreover, most of these 35 freed Indians have risen to the status of traders. Of those who have originally come on their own means, a large majority have taken a long time to be able to get on the Voters' Roll. Of the 46 whom I have not been able to get identified, a great many, by their names, appear to belong to the trading class. There are many Colonial-born Indians in the Colony. They are also educated, and yet on the Voters' Roll there are only 9. This would show that they are too poor to have the sufficient qualifications. On the whole, therefore, it would seem that taking the present List as a basis, the fears as to the Indian vote assuming threatening proportions are imaginary. Of the 205, over 40 are either dead or have left the Colony.

The following table is an analysis of the Indian Voters' List according to their occupation:

Trading Class	Storekeepers	92
	Merchants	32
	Goldsmiths	4
	Jewellers	3
	Confectioner	1
	Fruiterers	4
	Tradesmen	11
	Tinsmith	1
	Tobacco Merchants	2
	Eating-House Keeper	1
		151

Clerks & Assistants	Clerks	21
	Accountants	6
	Book-keeper	1
	Salesmen	6
	Schoolmaster	1
	Photographer	1
	Interpreters	4
	Storemen	5
	Barbers	2
	Barman	1
	Managers	2
		50

Gardeners & Others	Vegetable Dealer	1
	Farmers	4
	Domestic Servants	5
	Fisherman	1
	Gardeners	26
	Lamp-lighters	3
	Cart Drivers	2
	Constables	2
	Labourers	2
	Waiter	1
	Cooks	3
		50
		251

This analysis also ought, I think, to assist unbiased men in removing their fears as to the Voters' List being swamped by undeserving or lowest-class Indians. For, by far the greatest number belongs to the trading or the so-called "Arab" class who, at any rate, are acknowledged to be not quite unfit to vote.

Those classified under the second heading either belong to the trader class or to that class of Indians who have received a tolerably good English education.

Those belonging to the third division may be termed labourers of a higher order—far above the average indentured Indian. They are those who have settled in the Colony for over 20 years with their families and either own property or pay good rents. I may say, also, that, if my information be correct, most of these voters can read and write their own mother tongue. Thus, if the present Indian Voters' List is to serve as a guide for the future and assuming that the franchise qualification remains as it is, the List is very satisfactory from a European standpoint, first, because numerically the voting strength of the Indians is very poor, and secondly, because most (more than $\frac{3}{4}$) of the Indian voters belong to the trading class. It should also be borne in mind that the number of the trading Indians in the Colony will remain almost the same for a long time. For, while many come every month, an equal number leaves for India. As a rule, the incoming ones take the place of the outgoing ones.

So far I have not imported the natural proclivities of the two communities into the argument at all but have merely dealt with the figures. Yet, the natural proclivities will have not a little to do with the political activity of the two. There cannot be two opinions about the fact that the Indians, as a rule, do not actively meddle with politics. They have never tried to usurp political power anywhere. Their religion (no matter whether it be Mahomedan or Hindu, the teaching of ages cannot be

obliterated by a mere change of name) teaches them indifference to material pursuits. Naturally they are satisfied so long as they can earn a respectable living. I take the liberty to say that had not an attempt been made to tread upon their commercial pursuits, had not attempts been made and repeated to degrade them to the condition of pariahs of society, had not, in fact, an attempt been made to keep them for ever "hewers of wood and drawers of water," i.e., in a state of indenture or in one very much resembling it, there would have been no franchise agitation. I would go further. I have no hesitation in saying that even now there is no political agitation in the real sense of the term. But an attempt is, most unfortunately, being made by the Press to father, as it were, such an agitation upon the Indians. Leave them to follow their legitimate pursuits, do not attempt to degrade them, treat them with ordinary kindness and there would be no franchise question, simply because they would not even take the trouble to have their names on the Voters' Roll.

But it has been said, and that too by responsible persons, that a few Indians want political power and that these few are Mahomedan agitators and that the Hindus should learn from past experience that the Mahomedan rule will be ruinous for them. The first statement is without foundation and the last statement is most unfortunate and painful. To gain political power is entirely impossible, if gaining political power means entrance into the Legislative Assembly. Such a statement pre-supposes the presence in the Colony of very wealthy Indians having a competent knowledge of the English language. Now, there are very few wealthy, as distinguished from well-to-do, Indians in the Colony and there is perhaps none capable of discharging the duties of a legislator, not because there is none capable of understanding politics, but because there is none possessing such a knowledge of the English language as would be expected of a legislator.

The second statement is an attempt to set the Hindus against the Mahomedans in the Colony. How any responsible man in the Colony can wish for such a calamity is very wonderful. Such attempts have been attended by the most grievous results in India and have even threatened the permanence of British rule. To make them in this Colony where the two sects are living most amicably is, I venture to say, most mischievous.

It is a healthy sign that it is now recognised that to debar all Indians from the Franchise would be a grievous injustice. Some think that the so-called Arabs should be allowed the Franchise, some think there should be a selection made among them, and some think that the indentured Indians should never be able to get the Franchise. The latest suggestion comes from Stanger, and is most humorous. If that suggestion were to be followed, those alone who could prove that they were voters in India would be entitled to it in Natal. Why such a rule for the poor Indians alone? I do not think they would object to such an arrangement if it were applicable to all. And I should not be surprised if the Europeans also were to find it difficult to get their names on the Voters' List in the Colony under such conditions. For how many Europeans are there in the Colony who were on the Voters' List in the States they have come from? If, however, the statement were made with regard to the Europeans, it would be received with the strongest indignation. It has been received seriously with regard to the Indians.

It has also been stated that the Indians agitate for "one Indian one vote". I submit that the statement is without the slightest foundation, and is calculated to create unnecessary prejudice against the Indian community. I believe that the present property qualification is sufficient, at any rate for the present if not for all time, to maintain the superior numerical strength of the European vote. If, however, the European Colonists think other-

wise, no Indian, I think, will take exception to a reasonable and real educational qualification and larger property qualification than at present. What the Indians do and would protest against is colour distinction—disqualification based on account of racial difference. The Indian subjects of Her Majesty have been most solemnly assured over and over again that no disqualifications or restrictions will be placed upon them because of their nationality or religion. And this assurance was given and has been repeated upon no sentimental grounds but on proof of merit. The first note was struck after it was ascertained beyond doubt that the Indians could be safely treated on a footing of equality, that they were most loyal to the throne and law-abiding, and that the British hold of India could be permanently maintained only upon those terms and no other. That there have been serious departures from the above assurance would, I submit, be no answer to the solid fact of its existence. I think those departures would be exceptions to prove the rule, they would not override it. For, if I had time and space at my disposal, and if I were not afraid of tiring the readers' patience, I could quote innumerable instances in which the Proclamation of 1858 has been strictly acted upon, and is even at the present moment being acted upon in India and elsewhere. And, surely, this is not the occasion for a departure from it. I submit, therefore, that the Indians are perfectly justified in protesting against racial disqualifications and expecting that their protest will be respected. Having said so much, I venture to say on behalf of my fellow-brothers that they would not think of objecting to any measure, with regard to the franchise, which may be devised in order to keep the Voters' Roll clear of objectionable men, or to provide against preponderance of the Indian vote in future. I am confident that the Indians have no wish to see ignorant Indians who cannot possibly be expected to understand the value

of a vote being placed on the Voters' List. They submit that all are not such, and that such are to be found, more or less, in all communities. The object of every right-minded Indian is to fall in with the wishes of the European Colonists as far as possible. They would rather forgo a crumb from the loaf than have the whole in opposition to the European Colonists and from England. The object of this appeal is to beseech the legislators and the European Colonists to devise or countenance only such a measure, if one is necessary, that would be acceptable also to those affected by it. To make the position clearer, I would take the liberty to show by extracts from a Blue book what the most eminent Colonists have thought about the question.

Mr. Saunders, a member of the late Honourable Legislative Council, could go only thus far:

> The mere definition that these signatures must be in full and in the elector's own handwriting and written in European characters would go a long way to check the extreme risk of the Asiatic mind swamping the English. (*Affairs of Natal*, *C.* 3796-1883)

At page 7 of the same book Captain Graves, the late Protector of Immigrants, says:

> I am of opinion that only those Indians who have abandoned all claim for themselves and their families to a free return passage to India are justly entitled to the Franchise.

It should be noticed that Captain Graves spoke of the Indians recognised by his department, i.e., the indentured Indians.

The then Attorney-General and present Chief Justice says:

> It will be noticed that the measure drafted by me contains clauses which have been adopted from the recommendations of the Select Committee providing for the carrying out of the alternative plan mentioned in Mr. Saunders's letter, while the proposal for the special disqualification of aliens has not been considered advisable of adoption.

At page 14 of the same book he says again:

> As regards the proposal to exclude from the exercise of the Fran-

chise all persons of every nationality or race which is not in every respect under the common law of the Colony, this is a provision evidently aimed at the electoral rights at present enjoyed by the Indian and Creole population of this Colony. As I have already stated in my report, Serial No. 12, I cannot recognise the justice or expediency of such a measure.

The Blue book in question contains much interesting reading on the Franchise question and shows clearly that the idea of special disqualification was repugnant to the Colonists at the time.

The reports of the various meetings held in connection with the Franchise show that the speakers have invariably argued that the Indians shall not be allowed to occupy this country which has been won by European blood and which has been made what it is by European hands, and show that the Indians are treated as intruders in the Colony. As to the first statement I can only say that, if the Indians are to be denied any privileges because they have not shed their blood for this land, the Europeans belonging to other States in Europe should not receive the same privileges. It could also be argued that the immigrants from England also have no business to trespass upon the special preserve of the first White settlers. And surely, if the shedding of blood is any criterion of merit, and if British Colonists consider the other British dominions as portions of the British Empire, the Indians have shed their blood for Britain on many an occasion. The Chitral campaign is the most recent instance.

As to the Colony having been made by European hands and the Indian being an intruder, I beg to submit that all the facts show quite the opposite.

Without any comments of my own I shall now venture to quote extracts from the *Report of the Indian Immigrants Commission* referred to above, for a loan of which I am indebted to the Protector of Immigrants.

Says Mr. Saunders, one of the Commissioners, at page 98:

Indian Immigration brought prosperity, prices rose, people were no longer content to grow or sell produce for a song, they could

do better; war, high prices for wool, sugar, etc., kept up prosperity and prices of local produce in which the Indians dealt.

On page 99 he says:

I return to the consideration of the question as one of broad public interest. One thing is certain—White men will not settle in Natal or any other part of South Africa to become mere hewers of wood and drawers of water; rather than that they will leave us either for the vast interior or by sea. While this is a fact, our records prove, as do those of other Colonies, that the introduction of coloured labour which develops and draws out the hidden capabilities of the soil and its unoccupied acres opens out at the same time numerous unforeseen fields for the profitable employment of White settlers.

Nothing more clearly proves this than our own experiences. If we look to 1859, we shall find that the assured promise of Indian labour resulted in an immediate rise of revenue which increased four-fold within a few years. Mechanics who could not get work and were earning 5/- a day, and less, found their wages more than doubled, and progress gave encouragement to everyone from the Burg to the Sea. But a few years later, alarm (a well-founded alarm) arose, that it[1] would be suspended (the records are there to correct me if I am wrong) simultaneously, down went the revenue and wages, immigration was checked, confidence vanished and retrenchment and reductions of salaries was the main thing thought of; and yet another change, some years later in 1873 (long after the discovery of diamonds in 1868), a fresh promise of renewed Indian Immigration created its effect, and up again went the revenue, wages and salaries, and retrenchment was soon spoken of as a thing of the past (would that this was so now).

Records like these ought to tell their own tale and silence childish race sentimentalities and mean jealousies.

In further and collateral corroboration of the effect of introduction of coloured labour on the welfare of White settlers let me refer to a speech made by the Duke of Manchester who has so identified himself with colonial interests. He had just returned from Queensland and told his hearers that the result of an agitation there, hostile to the introduction of coloured labour, had proved most disastrous to those very White settlers who had hoped by checking the supply of imported coloured labourers to destroy competition which they wrongly imagined deprived the White settlers of work.

[1] Indian labour recruitment.

At page 100 the same gentleman continues:

So far as concerns free Indian traders, their competition and the consequent lowering of the prices of articles of consumption by which the public benefits (and yet, strange to say, of which it complains) it is clearly shown that these Indian shops have been and are most exclusively supported by the larger firms of White merchants who thus practically employ these men to dispose of their goods.

Stop Indian immigration if you will; if there are not enough unoccupied houses now, empty more by clearing out Arabs or Indians, who add to the productive and consuming power of a less than half-peopled country, but let us trace results in this one branch of the enquiry taking it as an example of others, trace out how untenanted houses depreciate the value of property and securities, how after this must result stagnation in the building trade, and those other trades and stores for supplies dependent on it. Follow out how this leads to a reduced demand for White mechanics, and with the reduction in spending power of so many, how fall of revenue is to be expected next, need of retrenchment, or taxation, or both. Let this result and others, far too numerous to be calculated on in detail, be faced, and if blind race sentimentalism or jealousy is to prevail, so be it.

Mr. Henry Binns gave his evidence to the following effect before the Commission (page 156):

In my opinion the free Indian population is a most useful section of the community. A large portion of them, considerably larger than is generally supposed, are in service in the Colony, particularly employed as house servants in the towns and villages. They are also considerable producers, and from information which I have taken some trouble to gather, I conclude that the free Indians have grown about 100,000 maunds maize per annum for the last two or three years, besides considerable quantities of tobacco and other articles. Before there was a free Indian population, the towns of Pietermaritzburg and Durban had no supply of fruit, vegetables and fish; at present all these things are fully supplied.

We have never had any immigrants from Europe who have shown any inclination to become market gardeners and fishermen, and I am of opinion that but for the free Indian population the markets of Maritzburg and Durban would be as badly supplied now as they were ten years ago.

. . . Were coolie immigration to be permanently stopped, the rate of wages payable to European mechanics would probably not be affected one way or the other, but in a very short time after such stoppage there would cease to be as much employment for them as there is now. Tropical cultivation never has been, and never will be, carried on without Indian labourers.

The then Attorney-General and present Chief Justice thus gave his evidence before the Commisssion (page 327):

. . . In my opinion numbers of the Indians who have been introduced have in a great measure provided on the Coast for the failure of White immigrants, and have cultivated lands which would otherwise remain uncultivated, with crops which are of real advantage to the inhabitants of the Colony. Many who have not availed themselves of the return passage to India have turned out to be trusty and useful domestic servants.

That both the freed and free Indians have been very useful to the Colony generally can be proved by still more overwhelming proofs. The Commissioners in their report at page 82 say:

19. They show commendable industry in fishing and fish-curing. The Indian fishing settlement on Salisbury Island, in Durban Bay, has been of manifest advantage not only to the Indian but to the White inhabitants of the Colony.

20. . . . In numerous localities in the upland as well as in the Coast districts, they have converted waste and unproductive land into well-kept gardens, planted with vegetables, tobacco, maize, and fruit trees. Those settled in the vicinity of Durban and Pietermaritzburg have succeeded in winning for themselves almost entirely the supplying of the local markets with vegetables. It must be that this competition by free Indians has worked to the prejudice of those White Colonists who once had the monopoly of the trade. . . . In fairness to the free Indians we must observe that the competition is legitimate in its nature and that it certainly has been welcomed by the general community. From an early hour in the morning, Indian hawkers, male and female, adults and children, go busily with heavy baskets on their heads from house to house, and thus citizens can now daily, at their own doors, and at low rates, purchase wholesome vegetables and fruit, which, not many years ago, they could not with certainty procure even in the public markets, and at exorbitant prices.

As to the traders the Commissioners' report at page 74 says:

> We are convinced that much of the irritation existing in the minds of European Colonists against the whole Indian population of the Colony has been excited by the undoubted ability of these Arab traders to compete with European merchants, and specially with those who have chiefly directed their attention to the supply of articles, notably rice, largely consumed by the Indian Immigrant population. . . .
>
> We are of opinion that these Arab traders have been drawn to Natal by the presence therein of those Indians who have been introduced under the Immigration Laws. Rice is the chief food of the 30,000 Indian immigrants now in the Colony, and these astute traders have so successfully devoted their tact and energy to the supply of that article that the price to all consumers fell from 21s. per bag in former years to 14s. in 1884. . . .
>
> It is said that Kaffirs can buy from Arabs at from 25 to 30 per cent lower rates than those obtaining six or seven years ago.
>
> It does not lie within the scope of our Commission to discuss at length the restrictive measure which some desire to impose upon Asiatics or "Arab" traders. *We are content to place on record our strong opinion, based on much observation, that the presence of these traders has been beneficial to the whole Colony, and that it would be unwise, if not unjust, to legislate to their prejudice.* (The italics are mine.)
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> * * *
>
> 8\. . . . Nearly all of them are Mahommedans, either total abstainers from alcoholic liquors or drinking them in moderation. They are thrifty by nature and submissive to the law.
>
> Out of the 72 European witnesses who gave their evidence before the Commission, almost every one of those who spoke as to the presence of the Indian affecting the Colony has said that he is indispensable for its welfare.

I have quoted the extracts at some length not to argue therefrom that the Indians should have the Franchise (they have it already), but to refute the charge that the Indian is an intruder and the statement that he has nothing to do with the prosperity of the Colony. "The proof of the pudding lies in the eating." The best proof is that, no matter what is being said against the Indians, they are

yet wanted; the Protector's department is unable to cope with the demand for Indian labour.

At page 5 of the Annual Report, 1895, the Protector says:

> At the close of last year there was an unsupplied balance of 1,330 men to complete the year's indent. In addition to this number, 2,760 men were applied for to arrive in 1895, making a total of 4,090. Of this number, 2,032 arrived during the year under report (1,049 from Madras and 983 from Calcutta), leaving a balance of 2,058 (less 12 men lapsed requisitions) to arrive during the present year to complete the last year's indent.

If the Indian is really harmful to the Colony, the best and the justest method is to stop further immigration and, in due course, the present Indian population will cease to trouble the Colony much. To have them under conditions that mean slavery is hardly fair.

If then this appeal has at all satisfactorily answered the various objections raised to the Indian Franchise; if the reader accepts the assertion that the Franchise agitation on the part of the Indians is merely a protest against degradation, which the counter agitation contemplates, and not an attempt to gain political power or influence, I humbly think I am justified in asking the reader to pause and consider before he decides to oppose the Indian Franchise tooth and nail. Although the "British subject" idea has been rejected by the Press as a craze and fad, I have to fall back upon that idea. Without it there would have been no franchise agitation whatever. Without it there would probably have been no State-aided immigration. Very probably the Indian would have been an impossibility in Natal if he were not a British subject. I, therefore, appeal to every Briton in South Africa not to lightly dismiss the "British subject" idea from his mind. The Proclamation of 1858 was Her Majesty's act, presumably approved of by Her subjects. For, it was done, not arbitrarily, but according to the advice of Her then advisers, in whom the voters, by their votes, had reposed their full trust. India belongs to England and England does not wish to lose her hold

of India. Every act done by a Briton towards an Indian cannot but have some effect in moulding the final relations between Britons and Indians. It is, moreover, a fact that the Indian is in South Africa because he is a British subject; he has to be tolerated whether one likes it or not. Is it not then better that nothing should be done that would unnecessarily embitter the feelings between the two communities? By coming to a hasty conclusion, or by forming conclusions on groundless assumptions, it is not at all unlikely that injustice may unintentionally be done to the Indians.

The question in the minds of all reasonable men, I submit, should be not how to drive away the Indians from the Colony (for that is impossible), but how to bring about satisfactory relations between the two communities. Even from a most selfish point of view, I submit, no good can result from an attitude of unfriendliness and hatred towards the Indians, unless there is any pleasure in creating in one's mind an unfriendly feeling towards one's neighbour. Such a policy is repugnant to the British Constitution and the British sense of justice and fair play, and above all hateful to the spirit of Christianity which is professed by the objectors to the Indian Franchise.

I appeal more particularly to the Press, the public men throughout South Africa and the clergy: Public opinion is in your hands. You mould and guide it. It is for you to consider whether the policy hitherto pursued is the right and proper one to continue. Your duty as Britons and leaders of public opinion cannot be to divide the two communities but to weld them together.

The Indians have many blemishes and they are themselves, no doubt, to blame to some extent for the present unsatisfactory state of feelings between the two peoples. My object is to induce you to believe that the blame does not entirely lie on one side alone.

Often and often have I read in the papers and heard that the Indians have nothing to complain about. I submit

that neither you nor the Indians here are capable of forming an impartial judgment. I, therefore, draw your attention entirely to the outside public opinion, to the Press, alike in England and India, which is practically unanimous in coming to the conclusion that the Indians have a reasonable ground for complaint. And, in this connection, I beg to deny the statement that has been often made that the outside opinion is based on exaggerated reports sent from South Africa by the Indians. I venture to claim to know something about the reports sent to England and India, and I have no hesitation in saying that the reports sent almost invariably err on the side of underestimation. Not a single statement has been made which cannot be substantiated by unimpeachable evidence. But the most remarkable fact is that there is no dispute as to facts which are admitted. The outside opinion based on those admitted facts is that the Indians are not fairly treated in South Africa. I will quote only one extract taken from a Radical newspaper, *The Star*. The opinion of the soberest journal in the world, *The Times*, is known to everyone in South Africa.

The Star of 21st October, 1895, commenting upon the deputation that waited on Mr. Chamberlain, says:

> These particulars are enough to throw light upon the hateful persecution to which British Indian subjects are being subjected. The new Indian Immigration Law Amendment Bill, which virtually proposes to reduce Indians to a state of slavery, is another example. The thing is a monstrous wrong, an insult to British subjects, a disgrace to its authors, and a slight upon ourselves. Every Englishman is concerned to see that the commercial greed of the South African trader is not permitted to wreak such bitter injustice upon men who alike by Proclamation and by Statute are placed upon an equality with ourselves before the Law.

If I could but convince you that the 'greatest kindness' is not shown to the Indian in South Africa and that the Europeans are also to blame for the prevailing state of things, a way will have been paved for a dispassionate discussion of the whole Indian question, and perhaps it

will be solved without any intervention from Downing Street to the satisfaction of both the parties concerned. Why should the Clergy remain silent on this momentous question, momentous because it affects the future of South Africa? They do take part in politics pure and simple. They do attend the meetings convened to urge the disfranchisement of the Indians. But this is not merely a political question. Will they see a race degraded and insulted because of the 'unreasoning' prejudice against it and sit still? Is such indifference sanctioned by Christ's Christianity?

I repeat again, it is not political power that the Indians want. It is degradation, it is many other consequences and measures that will flow from and will be based on the disfranchisement that they dread and resist.

In conclusion, I shall be deeply indebted to those who would read this and be kind enough to express their opinion about its subject matter. Many Europeans have privately expressed their sympathy for the Indians and have strongly disapproved of the sweeping resolutions passed at the various meetings held in the Colony in connection with the Indian Franchise and the bitter tone of the speeches made. If these gentlemen will come forward and have the courage of their convictions, I submit, they will have a four-fold reward. They will earn the gratitude of the 40,000 Indians in the Colony, indeed of the whole of India, and will render true service to the Colony by disabusing the minds of the Europeans of the notion that the Indian is a curse to the Colony; they will serve humanity by rescuing or assisting to rescue a portion of an ancient race from unwarranted persecution which they know exists in the whole of South Africa, and last but not least, in common with the noblest Britons, be the forgers of the links that will unite England and India in love and peace. I humbly submit that such an achievement is worth a little ridicule that the pioneers will be subjected to. To separate the two communities is easy enough, to unite them by the 'silken cord' of love is equally

difficult. But then, everything that is worth having is also worth a great deal of trouble and anxiety.

The Natal Indian Congress has been mentioned in connection with this matter and has been much misrepresented. In a separate pamphlet[1] its objects and methods of working will be fully discussed.

While this was in course of preparation, Mr. Maydon made a speech at Bellair and a curious resolution was passed at the meeting. With the greatest deference to the Honourable gentleman, I venture to take exception to his statement that the Indians have ever remained in a state of servitude and are, therefore, unfit for self-government. Although he invoked the aid of history in support of his statement, I venture to say that history fails to bear out the statement. In the first place Indian history does not date from the invasion of Alexander the Great. But I take the liberty to say that India of that date will compare very favourably with Europe of today. In support of that statement I beg to refer him to the Greek description of India at pp. 169-70 of Hunter's *Indian Empire*, partly quoted in my "Open Letter". What, however, of India of a period previous to that date? History says that the Aryans' home was not India but they came from Central Asia, and one family migrated to India and *colonized* it, the others to Europe. The Government of that day was, so history says, a civilized Government in the truest sense of the term. The whole Aryan literature grew up then. The India of Alexander's time was India on the decline. When other nations were hardly formed, India was at its zenith, and the Indians of this age are descendants of that race. To say, therefore, that the Indians have been ever under servitude is hardly correct. India certainly has not proved unconquerable. If that be reason for disfranchisement, I have nothing to say except this, that every nation will, unfortunately, be found wanting in this respect. It is true

[1] This is not available.

England "wafts her sceptre" over India. The Indians are not ashamed of that fact. They are proud to be under the British Crown, because they think that England will prove India's deliverer. The wonder of all wonders seems to be that the Indians, like the favoured nation of the Bible, are irrepressible in spite of centuries of oppression and bondage. And many British writers think that India is under England with her consent.

Professor Seeley says:

> The nations of India have been conquered by an army, of which, on the average a fifth part was English. In the early battles of the Company, by which its power was decisively established, at the siege of Arcot, at Plassey, at Buxar, there seems always to have been more Sepoys than Europeans on the side of the Company. And, let us observe further, that we do not hear of the Sepoys fighting ill, of the English as bearing the whole brunt of the conflict. . . . But, if once it is admitted that the Sepoys always outnumbered the English, and that they kept pace with the English in efficiency as soldiers, the whole theory, which attributes our success to an immeasurable natural superiority in valour, falls to the ground.—Digby's *India for the Indians and for England.*

The Honourable gentleman is also reported to have said:

> We (the Colonists) were entrusted with Responsible Government in Natal under certain circumstances. These have now become absolutely changed, brought about by your refusal to sanction our Bill. You have brought about a condition of things that is so fraught with danger that it is our clear duty to hand back to you the authority which you gave us.

How contrary to facts is all this! It assumes that the Home Government are now trying to thrust the Indian Franchise on the Colony, while the fact is that the Responsible Government is trying to materially alter the circumstances which existed at the time it was granted. Would not Downing Street be justified in saying: "We entrusted you with Responsible Government under certain circumstances. These have now become absolutely changed, brought about by your Bill of last year. You have brought about a condition of things that is so fraught with danger

to the whole British Constitution and British notion of justice that it is our clear duty not to allow you to trifle with the fundamental principles on which the British Constitution is based." ?

The time when the Responsible Government was accepted was, I submit, the time when Mr. Maydon's objection might have been valid. Whether Responsible Government would ever have been granted, had the European Colonists insisted upon disfranchisement of the Indians is another question.

M. K. Gandhi

From a pamphlet printed by T. L. Cullingworth, Printer, 40 Field Street, Durban, 1895.

68. *VEGETARIANISM IN NATAL*

It is an uphill battle to fight in Natal, and, indeed, in South Africa. Yet there are few places where Vegetarianism would be more conducive to health, or more economical or practicable. Of course, at present, it is hardly economical and it certainly requires a great deal of self-denial to remain a Vegetarian. To become one seems almost an impossibility. "It is all very well in London, where there are scores of Vegetarian Restaurants, but how can you become or remain a Vegetarian in South Africa, where you find very little nourishing Vegetarian food?" has been the invariable reply to my enquiries, in the course of conversation on the matter with scores of men. One would have thought such a reply would be impossible in South Africa, seeing that it enjoys a semi-tropical climate, and its vegetable resources are inexhaustible. Nevertheless, the reply is entirely justifiable. In the best of hotels you find, as a rule, potatoes the only vegetable at the lunch-time, and that badly cooked. At dinner-time you find, perhaps, two vegetables, and the vegetable menu is hardly ever changed. It is little short of a scandal that in this Garden Colony of South Africa, where,

at the proper time, you can get fruit for a song, you find very little fruit at the hotels. Pulses are conspicuous by their absence. A gentleman wrote to me to ask if it was possible to buy pulses in Durban; he could not procure them in Charlestown and the neighbouring townships. Nuts can only be bought at Christmas time.

Such are the present circumstances. Vegetarian friends, therefore, need not wonder if I can report very little perceptible progress as a result of nearly nine months' advertising and quiet persuasion. Nor are the above the only difficulties in the way of Vegetarian propaganda. People here think of very little else than gold. The gold fever is so infectious in these regions that it has smitten the highest and the lowest, the spiritual teachers included. They find no time for higher pursuits of life; they find no time to think of the beyond.

Copies of *The Vegetarian* are supplied regularly every week to most of the libraries. Occasional advertisements are inserted in the newspapers. Every opportunity is availed of to introduce the subject of Vegetarianism. So far this has given rise to some sympathetic correspondence and enquiries. A few books have also been bought. Many more have been distributed. Correspondence and conversation have not been devoid of humour. A lady, who corresponded with me in connection with Esoteric Christianity, became angry on finding that Esoteric Christianity had anything to do with Vegetarianism. She was so disgusted that she returned the books lent her without reading them. One gentleman thought it disgraceful for a man to shoot or slaughter an animal. "He would not do it for the life of him," but he had no compunction in eating the meat prepared for him.

The possibilities of South Africa, and particularly of Natal, from a Vegetarian standpoint, are too numerous to mention, only there are no Vegetarian workers. The soil is so fertile that it would grow almost anything. Vast

tracts of land await only a skilful hand to turn them into real mines of gold. If a few men could be induced to turn their attention from the Johannesburg gold to the quieter method of earning money by cultivation, and to get rid of their colour prejudice, there is no doubt that every variety of vegetable and fruit could be grown in Natal. The climate of South Africa is such that the Europeans alone will never be able to work the soil as much as is possible. They have got the Indians to help them, but they simply would not make use of them owing to the colour prejudice, which is so strong in South Africa. Even in Natal, where the prosperity of the Colony admittedly depends upon the Indian labour, the prejudice is very strong. I have a letter from a gardener who, much as he would like to employ Indian labour, is handicapped owing to this prejudice. Vegetarians, therefore, have a scope for patriotic work. The line of marriage between White British subjects and Indians is getting thicker day by day in South Africa. The best English and Indian statesmen are of opinion that Britain and India can be indissolubly united by the chain of love. The spiritualists anticipate good results from such a union. The South African White British subjects are doing their utmost to retard, and, if possible, to prevent such a union. It may be that some Vegetarians may come forward to arrest such a catastrophe.

I would venture to make one suggestion and then close this hurriedly written resumé of the work in Natal. If some men of means, and well-up in Vegetarian literature, were to travel in different parts of the world, explore the resources of the different countries, report upon their possibilities from a Vegetarian standpoint, and invite Vegetarians to migrate to those countries which they may consider suitable for Vegetarian propaganda, and, at the same time, worth settling in from a pecuniary point of view, much Vegetarian work can be done, openings can be found for poor Vegetarians, and real centres of Vegetarianism can be established

in various parts of the world.

But then Vegetarianism, in order to do this should be a religion, and not merely a hygienic convenience. The platform will have to be shifted much higher.

The Vegetarian, 21-12-1895

69. *VEGETARIANISM*

DURBAN,
February 3, 1896

TO

THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

As one interested in food reform, permit me to congratulate you on your leader in Saturday's issue on "The New Science of Healing", which lays so much stress on the adoption of the natural food, i.e., vegetarianism. But for the unfortunate characteristic of this "self-indulgent" age, in which "nothing is more common than to hear men warmly supporting a theory in the abstract without any intention of submitting to it in practice", we should all be vegetarians. For, why should it be otherwise when Sir Henry Thompson calls it "a vulgar error" to suppose that flesh foods are indispensable for our sustenance, and the most eminent physiologists declare that fruit is the natural food of man, and when we have the example of Buddha, Pythagoras, Plato, Porphyry, Ray, Daniel, Wesley, Howard, Shelley, Sir Isaac Pitman, Edison, Sir W. B. Richardson, and a host of other eminent men as vegetarians. The Christian vegetarians claim that Jesus was also a vegetarian, and there does not seem to be anything to oppose that view, except the reference to His having eaten broiled fish after the Resurrection. The most successful missionaries in South

Africa (the Trappists) are vegetarians. Looked at from every point of view, vegetarianism has been demonstrated to be far superior to flesh-eating. The Spiritualists hold, and the practice of the religious teachers of all the religions, except, perhaps, the generality of Protestant teachers, shows that nothing is more detrimental to the spiritual faculty of man than the gross feeding on flesh. The most ardent vegetarians attribute the agnosticism, the materialism, and the religious indifference of the present age to too much flesh-eating and wine-drinking, and the consequent disappearance, partial or total, of the spiritual faculty in man. Vegetarian admirers of the intellectual in man point to the whole host of the most intellectual men of the world, who were invariably abstemious in their habits, especially at the time of writing their best works, to demonstrate the sufficiency, if not the superiority, of the vegetarian diet from an intellectual standpoint. The columns of the vegetarian magazines and reviews afford a most decisive proof that where beef and its concoctions, with no end of physic thrown in, have lamentably failed, vegetarianism has triumphantly succeeded. Muscular vegetarians demonstrate the superiority of their diet by pointing out that the peasantry of the world are practically vegetarians, and that the strongest and most useful animal, the horse, is a vegetarian, while the most ferocius and practically useless animal, the lion, is a carnivore. Vegetarian moralists mourn over the fact that selfish men would—for the sake of gratifying their lustful and diseased appetite—force the butcher's trade on a portion of mankind, while they themselves would shrink with horror from such a calling. They moreover lovingly implore us to bear in mind that without the stimulants of flesh foods and wine it is difficult enough to restrain our passions and escape Satan's clutches, and not to add to those difficulties by resorting to meats and drinks which, as a rule, go hand in hand. For, it is claimed that vegetarianism, in which juicy fruits find the foremost place, is the

safest and surest cure for drunkenness, while meat-eating induces or increases the habit. They also argue that since meat-eating is not only unnecessary but harmful to the system, indulgence in it is immoral and sinful, because it involves the infliction of unnecessary pain to and cruelty towards harmless animals. Lastly, vegetarian economists, without fear of contradiction, assert that vegetarian foods are the cheapest diet, and their general adoption will go a long way towards mitigating, if not altogether suppressing, the rapidly growing pauperism side by side with the rapid march of the materialistic civilization and the accumulation of immense riches in the hands of a few. So far as I recollect, Dr. Louis Kuhne urges the necessity of vegetarianism on physiological grounds only, and does not give any hints for beginners, who always find it difficult to select the right kinds from a variety of vegetarian foods and to cook them properly. I have a selection of vegetarian cookery books (at from 1d. to 1s.), as also treatises on the subject dealing with its various aspects. The cheapest books are given away, and if any of your readers feel disposed, not merely to admire the new science of healing from a distance, but to put its tenets into practice, I shall be very glad to supply them with what pamphlets I possess on the subject, so far as it relates to vegetarianism. I submit the following for the consideration of those who believe in the Bible. Before the "Fall" we were vegetarians:

> And God said: behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which is fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat; and it was so.

There may be some excuse for the unconverted partaking of meat, but for those who say they are "born again", vegetarian Christians claim, there can be none; because their state surely should be equal, if not superior, to that of the people before the "Fall". Again, in times of Restitution:

> The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. . . . And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountains; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

These times may be far off yet for the whole world. But why cannot those who know and can — the Christians — enact them for themselves at any rate? There can be no harm in anticipating them, and, maybe, thereby their approach may be considerably hastened.

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 4-2-1896

70. *MEMORIAL TO NATAL GOVERNOR*

DURBAN,
February 26, 1896

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE SIR WALTER FRANCIS HELY-HUTCHINSON, KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED ORDER OF SAINT MICHAEL AND SAINT GEORGE, GOVERNOR AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN AND OVER THE COLONY OF NATAL, VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE SAME, AND SUPREME CHIEF OVER THE NATIVE POPULATION, GOVERNOR OF ZULULAND &C. &C. &C.
PIETERMARITZBURG, NATAL

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIAN BRITISH SUBJECTS RESIDING IN NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That Your Excellency's Memorialists, as representing the Indian community in Natal, hereby respectfully beg to approach Your Excellency with regard to the following

portions of Rules and Regulations for the disposal of *erven* in the Township of Nondweni, Zululand, published in the *Natal Government Gazette,* dated the 25th February 1896, viz.:

Part of Section 4: Persons of European birth or descent intending to bid at any such sale must give notice in writing at least twenty days prior to the date fixed for the sale to the Secretary for Zululand, Pietermaritzburg, or to the Government Secretary at Eshowe, Zululand, describing as far as practicable by numbers or otherwise the *erven* they are desirous of acquiring.

Part of Section 18: Only persons of European birth or descent shall be approved of as occupiers of *erven* or sites. On failure of compliance with the condition any such sites or *erven* shall revert to the Government as in the preceding section hereof.

Rule 20: It shall be a distinct condition subject to which the *erven* or sites are sold, and which condition shall be inserted in every freehold title applied for and issued in terms of Sections 10, 11, and 13 of these Regulations, that at no time shall the owner of sites or *erven* in the Nondweni Township bought hereunder be at liberty either to sell or let such sites or *erven* or any portion thereof or to permit occupation of them or any portion thereof free of rent to any other persons except those of European birth and descent, and in the event of the holder of such title deed contravening such conditions and stipulations, any such sites shall revert to the Government in terms and manner stated in Section 17 hereof.

Your Memorialists interpret the rules to mean exclusion of Her Majesty's Indian subjects from owning or acquiring property in the Nondweni Township.

Your Memorialists beg respectfully but emphatically to protest against the invidious distinction thus drawn between European and Indian British subjects.

Nor can your Memorialists find any reason for such exclusion, unless it be another point among many yielded to the colour prejudice in South Africa.

Your Memorialists humbly submit that such preference given to one portion of Her Majesty's subjects over another is not only contrary to the British policy and justice, but, in the case of the Indian community, violates the terms of

the Proclamation of 1858 which entitles British Indians to equal treatment with the Europeans.

Your Memorialists venture further to submit that, in view of the efforts of Her Majesty's Government on behalf of the Indians residing in the Transvaal, the distinction drawn by the rules under discussion with regard to property rights is somewhat strange and inconsistent.

Your Memorialists would crave leave to mention that many Indians own freehold property in other parts of Zululand.

Your Memorialists, therefore, humbly pray that, in virtue of the power reserved by Section 23 of the Regulations, Your Excellency will be pleased to order such alteration or amendment thereof as to do away with the above-mentioned distinction.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray &c. &c.

Sd. ABDUL KARIM HAJEE
AND 39 OTHERS

From a photostat of a handwritten copy.

71. INDIANS AND PASSES

DURBAN,
March 2, 1896

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Mercury

SIR,

In justice to the two defendants, Roberts and Richards, whom the worthy Superintendent of Police is pleased to call "upstarts" and other bad names, and in justice to the Indian community, I beg to encroach upon your space with reference to the partial report of the case in which the two defendants were charged under the Vagrancy Law and

the Superintendent's views thereon that appeared in your issue of the 29th February. The report and the opinion would seem to show that Mr. Waller's decision[1] is a miscarriage of justice. To give colour to that view, the Superintendent has elected to give that portion of the evidence which I wished, and still wish, to use in order to win public sympathy for the two defendants, and what is more, for people placed in a similar position.

I humbly think that theirs was a very hard case, and that the police erred in arresting them, and, afterwards, in harassing them. I said in the Court, and I repeat, that the Vagrant Law would cease to be oppressive if the police showed some consideration for the Indians and used discretion in arresting them. The fact that both are sons of indentured Indians should not go against them, especially in an English community, where a man's worth, not birth, is taken into account in judging him. If that were not so, a butcher's son would not have been honoured as the greatest poet. The Superintendent, then, makes much of the fact that the second defendant changed his name about two years ago, and tries thereby to excuse the wanton insult[2] to which he was submitted by the constable who arrested him. It should be remembered that the constable in charge knew nothing whatever as to when the name was changed, and surely his very features were sufficient to betray his nationality had he attempted, as the Superintendent supposes he did, to cover his nationality in order to escape the operation of the Vagrant Law. Nor did he

[1] Mr. Waller, Police Magistrate, dismissed the case on the ground that so long as a coloured man, found out of doors after 9 p.m. without a pass, told the police he was going home, it was sufficient answer to clear himself, as the law stated that only a coloured person found wandering between the hours of 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. without a pass from his employer, or not giving a good account of himself, may be arrested.

[2] The constable laughed at him when the defendant gave his name as Samuel Richards.

seem to be ashamed of his name or birth, for the answers came almost simultaneously with the questions as to birth and name, and seemed so much to please the amiable Superintendent as to extort the following expression from him: "Yes, my boy, if all were like you, the police would have no difficulty."

There can be nothing absolutely wrong in changing one's name unless it is wrong to change one's religion. To compare small things with great, Mr. Quilliam has become Haji Abdullah because he has become a Mahomedan. Mr. Webb, the late Consul-General of Manica, also adopted a Mahomedan name, on adopting the Mahomedan faith. Not only the Christian name but the Christian dress also is an offence for an Indian, according to the view of the constables. And now, according to the Superintendent's view, change of religion would render an Indian liable to suspicion. But why should this be so, assuming, of course, that the change is a result of honest belief and not a dodge to evade the law? In the present case I assume that both the defendants are honest Christians because I am told both are respected by Dr. Booth[1]. Of course, the Superintendent will retort, "But how is a man to know whether a man is an honest Christian or a Satan in the Christian garb?" This is a difficult question to answer. I submitted to the Court that each case could be judged on its own merits, and that the benefit of the ordinary presumptions should be given to the Indians, as it is given to other classes.

I submitted that two men, wearing a respectable dress, walking quietly along the main street at 9.30 p.m., stopping when questioned, protesting that they were returning from the gardens and were on their way home, which was not seven minutes' walk from the place where they were stopped, that one of them was a clerk and the other a teacher

[1] Minister of St. Aidan's Church, Durban.

(as was the case with the two unfortunate boys), may be given the benefit of the ordinary presumption. I submitted further that in cases like this the police might, if they suspected, see their charge safely home. But, even if that could not be done, they might be treated as respectable men under custody and not be prejudged to be thieves and robbers. The remarks about dress and religion and name might conveniently be postponed till they could be proved to be hypocrites.

About a year ago I was travelling from Standerton to Durban. Two of my fellow-passengers were suspected to be thieves. Their luggage, and with theirs mine also, because I was in the same compartment, was examined at Volksrust, and a detective was placed in the compartment. They could offer a glass of whisky to the Landdrost, who came to examine the luggage and talk to the detective as gentlemen and on equal terms, presumably because they were respectably dressed and were first-class passengers. The detective did not prejudge them. I must not omit to mention that they were Europeans. The detective all the way through was sorry that he had to perform the unpleasant duty. May I plead for the same treatment in cases like that of the unfortunate boys? Instead of the cell they might have been given some other place to lie in. They might have been given clean blankets to lie on if the cell could not be avoided. The constable might have spoken to them kindly. Had this been done the case would never have come before the Magistrate.

I venture to take exception to the Superintendent's statement that "these young upstarts elected to be locked up all night in preference to bail". The reverse is the truth. They offered bail and it was refused during the night. The Magistrate was not pleased with this treatment. They renewed their request to be bailed out in the morning. The request of the second defendant was granted. The constable refused to bail out the first. Against his name

was marked: "not to be released". The book containing that remark was produced in the court. Later, he was released at the instance of Inspector Benny, who promptly remedied the mistake as soon as he came to know it.

With deference to the Superintendent, I beg to say that the first defendant did not defy the law. The Magistrate made no order; but he, in his fatherly and kind manner, suggested that I should advise him to get the Mayor's pass.[1] I submitted that such was not necessary but said that in deference to his suggestion I would do so. The defendant has now received a reply from the Town Clerk that the pass will not be issued to him, a clerk and Sunday School teacher, having never been charged with any criminal offence. If he is not fit to be out after 9 p.m. he cannot be fit to be a Sunday School teacher. One would think that it is less dangerous for him to be out after nine than for him to be a Sunday School teacher who would mould the character of tender children. The Superintendent says that his force "has never interfered with the Arab merchants or other respectable coloured men at night." Were not these two boys fit to be ranked among "other respectable coloured men"? I appeal to him, and entreat him to consider well whether he himself would have arrested these two boys. I say in his own words, "If his whole force were as considerate and amiable as himself there would be no difficulty."

I think, in dealing with my "Open Letter", you were kind enough to say that cases of real grievance will readily command your sympathy. Do you consider this case a real grievance? If you do, I ask your sympathy so that cases like the above may not occur again. I have found it difficult to ask respectable Indian youths who may care for my advice to take out passes from their masters. I have asked them to take out the Mayor's pass of exemption.

[1] Of exemption.

But since the first application has been refused, it has damped the zeal of the others. If the public approve of such arrests the police may be induced to repeat them in spite of the Magistrate's opinion to the contrary. The Press, therefore, by its opinion can either make it easier for apparently respectable Indians to take out the Mayor's pass of exemption, or else almost impossible for the police to repeat such arrests. There is the recourse to a suit against the Corporation. But that is a recourse to be had in the last resort.

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Mercury, 6-3-1896

72. *TO ACTING SECRETARY FOR ZULULAND*

DURBAN,
March 4, 1896

C. WALSH, ESQ.
ACTING SECRETARY FOR ZULULAND
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter dated 27th ultimo in reply to the memorial about the Nondweni Township Regulations, which I had the honour to forward to His Excellency the Governor of Zululand, conveying the information that the Regulations are a copy of the Eshowe Township Regulations which were published during His Excellency's predecessor's time.

Such being the case, I would, on behalf of the Memorialists, venture to request His Excellency to order the alteration or amendment to the Regulations with regard to both the Townships, so as to do away with the colour distinction. In any case, I take the liberty to submit that the existence of similar Regulations for the Eshowe Township is, in my

humble opinion, no justification for the Nondweni Township Regulations, regard being especially had to the events that are now happening concerning the position of the Indians as to property rights in other parts of South Africa.

I believe there are no such Regulations for the Melmoth Township.

I beg, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records No. 427, Vol. 24.

73. *TO SECRETARY FOR ZULULAND*

CENTRAL WEST STREET,
DURBAN, NATAL,
March 6, 1896

THE SECRETARY FOR ZULULAND
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

May I enquire what led to the colour distinction being introduced in the Eshowe Township Regulations, seeing that none such exists with regard to the Melmoth Township Regulations, and also the date when Melmoth Township Regulations were published?

I remain, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

Colonial Office Records No. 427, Vol. 24.

74. LETTER TO DADABHAI NAOROJI

M. K. GANDHI
ADVOCATE
AGENT FOR
THE ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION
AND
THE LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY

P. O. BOX 66
CENTRAL WEST STREET,
DURBAN, NATAL,
March 7, 1896

THE HON'BLE MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI
NATIONAL LIBERAL CLUB
LONDON

SIR,

I venture to enclose herewith a cutting containing the Franchise Bill that the Ministry propose to introduce next session and a press copy of my letter to the Chairman of the British Committee.[1]

The Governor of Zululand has refused to grant the request of the Memorialists regarding Nondweni. I am now preparing a memorial[2] for the Home Government on the subject.

I beg to thank you for your letter about the Commando memorial.

I remain,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the original in Gandhiji's own hand.

[1] *Vide* p. 302, *infra.*

[2] *Vide* p. 303, *infra.*

75. *LETTER TO WEDDERBURN*[1]

M. K. GANDHI
ADVOCATE
AGENT FOR
THE ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION
AND
THE LONDON VEGETARIAN SOCIETY

P. O. BOX 66
CENTRAL WEST STREET,
DURBAN, NATAL,
March 7, 1896

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, BARONET, M. P. ETC.
CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE
OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
LONDON

SIR,

I venture to enclose herewith a cutting containing the Franchise Bill that the Government proposes to introduce during the next session of the Legislative Assembly of Natal in April. This Bill replaces the Act of 1894 against which a memorial[1] was sent to the Government. It is said that this Bill has been approved of by Mr. Chamberlain. If so it would place the Indian community in a very awkward position. The newspapers seem to think that India has representative institutions and that therefore the Bill will not affect the Indians. At the same time there can be no doubt that the Bill is meant to affect the Indian community. It is our intention to oppose the Bill. But in the meantime a question in the House of Commons, in my humble opinion, may be very useful and give an insight into Mr. Chamberlain's views. The Indian community will soon have to encroach upon

[1] *Vide* p.92, *supra*.

your time and attention on other matters of pressing importance.

I beg to remain,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the handwritten original.

76. *MEMORIAL TO MR. CHAMBERLAIN*

DURBAN, NATAL,
March 11, 1896

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES,
LONDON

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS
REPRESENTING THE INDIAN COMMUNITY IN NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Memorialists hereby venture to approach Her Majesty's Government with regard to certain Rules and Regulations in connection with the Township of Nondweni, Zululand, published in the *Natal Government Gazette* dated the 25th February, 1896, in so far as the said Regulations affect the rights of Her Majesty's Indian subjects to own or acquire property in the Township of Nondweni, as also with regard to similar Regulations for the Township of Eshowe in Zululand.

The portion of the Regulations affecting the British Indians is as follows:

Part of Section 4—Persons of European birth or descent intending to bid at any such sale (i.e. sale of *erven*) must give notice in

writing at least twenty days prior to the date fixed for the sale to the Secretary for Zululand etc.

Part of Section 18—Only persons of European birth or descent shall be approved of as occupiers of *erven* or sites. On failure of compliance with this condition any such sites or *erven* shall revert to the Government as in the preceding section hereof.

Part of Section 20—It shall be a distinct condition subject to which the *erven* or sites are sold, and which condition shall be inserted in every freehold title applied for, and issued in terms of Sections 10, 11 and 13 of these Regulations, that at no time shall the owner of sites or *erven* in the Nondweni Township bought hereunder, be at liberty either to sell or let such sites or *erven* or any portion thereof or to permit occupation of them, or any portion thereof free of rent, to any other persons except those of European birth and descent, and in the event of the holder of such title deed contravening such conditions and stipulations, any such sites or *erven* shall revert to the Government in terms and manner stated in Section 17 hereof.

The next day after the publication of the *Gazette* containing the Nondweni Regulations your Memorialists petitioned His Excellency the Governor of Zululand praying that the Regulations may be so altered or amended as to do away with the colour distinction therein.

In reply to the said memorial[1] a copy whereof is annexed hereto, your Memorialists were informed that the Regulations were "the same as the regulations in force for the Eshowe Township proclaimed by His Excellency's predecessor on 28th September 1891." Thereupon a request was made, on the 4th March, 1896, to the effect that both the regulations should be altered or amended with regard to the British Indians.

A reply thereto was received on the 5th March, 1896, to the effect that the Governor did not feel justified in acting on the suggestion.

Your Memorialists confidently trust that the wrong inflicted upon the Indian community is so manifest that it has only to be brought to the notice of Her Majesty's

[1] *Vide* p. 292, *supra*.

Government to be remedied. If such an invidious and, your Memorialists respectfully submit, unnecessary distinction cannot be permitted in self-governing Colonies, much less should it be permitted in a Crown Colony.

Many of your Memorialists own property in Zululand. In the year 1889, when the Township of Melmoth was sold, the Indian community laid out nearly £2,000 in the purchase of *erven* in that Township.

Your Memorialists respectfully submit, it is absolutely necessary that the Indian community should be allowed to purchase land in Zululand freely, if only for the reason that they may be able to make their outlay of the £2,000 profitable.

Even the Government organ in Natal considered the wrong so serious that, though as a rule hostile to the Indian aspirations, it viewed the memorial to the Governor of Zululand very favourably. The remarks are so apt that your Memorialists crave leave to quote them below:

> Zululand is likely soon to have an Indian question all its own. The rules and regulations published in the Government Gazette last Tuesday for the disposal of *erven* in the newly declared township of Nondweni include a number of sections which specially prevent all but persons of European birth or descent from purchasing property in the township, or even occupying any property in the township. The Indians, ever to the fore in such matters, have promptly sent a protest to the Governor against the promulgation of such rules and regulations, and seeing that Zululand is still a Crown Colony, and, therefore, more under the direct eyes of the Imperial authorities, we cannot very well see how such rules can be enforced when there is evidently so strong a disposition on the part of the Home Government to prevent the Franchise Law Amendment Bill passed in Natal from becoming law. From the protest presented by the Indians, we gather that some of them already own freehold property in Zululand, and, if this be the case, apart from any other reason, it seems to us the Memorialists have a cause for consideration. There may be some special provision as regards the occupation of land in the Zulu country which prohibits Indians from becoming property holders, but still the fact remains that the

territory is a Crown Colony, and this being so, it seems strange that rules and regulations can be made for that country which are not permitted in Natal, a responsibly governed Colony.

So frequently do the colour distinctions creep in into the rules and regulations, laws and bye-laws published in various parts of South Africa, that it is impossible for the Indian community, consisting, as it does, chiefly of traders and artisans with a knowledge sufficient only for the requirements of trade and, in many cases, even without it, to keep itself informed of all the legislation affecting its rights and bring it to the notice of Her Majesty's Government.

And things have come to such a pass that your Memorialists cannot expect redress from the local authorities, even in cases where the wrong complained of is a result of an oversight of the fundamental principles of the British Constitution, as in the present instance.

Your Memorialists fear that, if a Crown Colony can refuse property rights to a portion of Her Majesty's subjects, the Governments of the South African Republic and the Orange Free State would in a greater measure be justified in doing likewise or even going further.

Your Memorialists submit that the existence of the colour distinction in the regulations for Eshowe should not be a justification for similar regulations for Nondweni. If those for Eshowe are bad, rather your Memorialists submit, should both be altered and amended so as not to affect the just rights of the British Indian subjects.

Your Memorialists further venture to draw your attention to the fact that constant class legislation affecting Her Majesty's Indian subjects not only causes a great deal of anxiety to the Indian community in South Africa, but the petitions that have to be frequently made to have such legislation altered cause a great deal of expense which the Indian community, by no means in an over-prosperous condition, can ill afford to incur, not to mention the fact that such a state of constant unrest and

irritation seriously interferes with the business of the Indian community as a whole.

Nothing short of an enquiry into the position and status of the British Indians in South Africa, and a notification calling upon the authorities in South Africa to ensure the equality of treatment of Her Majesty's Indian subjects with all the other British subjects will, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, prevent the social and civil extinction of Her Majesty's loyal and law-abiding Indian subjects.

Your Memorialists, therefore, humbly pray that Her Majesty's Government will order alteration or amendment of the Eshowe and Nondweni Townships Regulations so as to remove the disabilities that they, in their present form, entail on Her Majesty's Indian subjects, and further humbly suggest that orders may be issued forbidding future class legislation affecting them.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray &c. &c.

(SD.) ABDUL KARIM HAJEE ADAM
AND OTHERS

From a photostat of a handwritten copy.

77. *THE INDIAN FRANCHISE*

DURBAN,
April 4, 1896

TO
THE EDITOR
The Natal Witness

SIR,

I would be much obliged if you could find space for the following by way of answer to "G.W.W.", who wrote

to you under date 11th March last, and did me the honour to criticise my pamphlet on the Indian Franchise.[1]

While I thank "G.W.W." for the personal fairness he has shown me in his treatment of the pamphlet I wish he had treated the subject matter of the "Appeal" as fairly. If he had read it with an unbiased mind, I think he would not have found any cause to differ from the views therein expressed. I have endeavoured to treat the subject from such a standpoint as would induce the European Colonists to extend ungrudgingly the hand of fellowship to the Indians without being elbowed out of their present position in so doing. I still maintain that there is no cause whatever for alarm, and if the European Colonists would only let the agitation die and consent to resume the *status quo*, they would find that their vote would not be swamped by the Indians. I further submit that, if ever such a contingency were to arise, it could be dealt with in anticipation, without the necessity of introducing colour distinction directly or indirectly. A real and reasonable educational test would perhaps for ever put a stop to the danger (if ever there be any) of the Indian vote swamping the European, and would, so far as possible, keep the Roll clear of the most objectionable European voters also, if any.

"G.W.W." takes exception to the arguments drawn from the relative strength of the true votes and "calls attention to what the next year's Roll may contain". I beg to call his attention to the fact that, although the Indians had every opportunity to "swamp" the List last year and the year before last, and every incentive to do so because of the fear as to the result of the Franchise Act, now about to be repealed, there were no additions to the number of Indian voters. It must have been either extraordinary apathy or want of qualifications that could account for such a result. But it could not have been any

[1] *Vide* p. 256, *supra*.

such apathy, for the "agitation" has been on foot for the last two years.

I, however, do not propose to examine "G.W.W." 's letter in detail, for want of time and space, and will merely give the information he asks for, and apply it to the new Bill to be introduced during the forthcoming session.

Mr. Curzon, the then Under-Secretary of State for India, in moving the second reading of the India Councils Act (1861) Amendment Bill, said, among other things:

> The object of the Bill, which it is my duty to expound to the House, is to widen the basis and extend the function of the Government of India, to give further opportunity than at present exists to the non-official and the native element in Indian society to take part in the work of government, and in this way to lend official recognition to that remarkable development, both in political industry and political capacity, which has been visible among the higher classes of Indian society since the Government of India was taken over by the Crown in 1858. This Bill is one to amend the India Councils Act of 1861. Legislative powers of some sort or other, but powers of a somewhat confused character and conflicting validity, have existed in India for a very long time. They existed with the rule of the old East India Company dating from the date of the Charters of the Tudor and Stuart Sovereigns; but the modern legislative system, under which India at present exists, owes its origin to the viceroyalty of Lord Canning and to the Secretaryship of State of Sir C. Wood, who was afterwards elevated to the peerage. Sir C. Wood, in 1861, carried through the House the India Councils Act of that year. . . . The Act of 1861 constituted three Legislative Councils in India—the Supreme Council of the Viceroy and the Provincial Councils of Madras and Bombay. The Supreme Legislative Council of the Viceroy only consists of the Governor-General and his Executive Council, and is recruited by a minimum of six and a maximum of twelve additional members, who are nominated by the Governor-General, of whom at least half must be non-official, whether they are drawn from the European or the native element. The Legislative Councils of Madras and Bombay are also recruited by a minimum of four and a maximum of eight additional members, who are nominated by the Provincial Governor, of whom at least half must be non-official. Since

> the passing of that Act, Legislative Councils have also been called into existence in Bengal and the North-West Provinces. In the case of Bengal, the Council consists of the Lieutenant-Governor and twelve nominated Councillors, and, in the case of the North-West Provinces, of the Lieutenant-Governor and nine nominated Councillors, of whom one-third in each case must be non-official. . . . A number of native gentlemen of intelligence and capacity and public spirit have been persuaded to come forward and to lend their services to the function of government, and undoubtedly the standard of merit of these Legislative Councils has stood high.

The Amending Act gives the right to *discuss* the Budget and the right of interpellation (rights hitherto not enjoyed). It also increases the number of members of the Council, and provides (vaguely) for a system of election. Of course, the Act is merely permissive.

According to the regulations issued under the above Act, out of eighteen seats for additional members for the Bombay Council, eight seats are filled by election. And the Corporation of Bombay (itself a representative body), such Municipal Corporations, or group or groups thereof, other than the Bombay Corporation, as the Governor-in-Council may from time to time prescribe, District Local Boards, or groups as above prescribed, the Sardars of the Deccan, or such other class of large landholders as above prescribed, associations of merchants, tradesmen or manufacturers, prescribed as above, and the Senate of the University of Bombay, have the power to elect those members by a majority of votes. Similar rules are published for the election by, or "nomination on the recommendation of", the various representative bodies of the various provinces which have Legislative Councils.

There is no class or colour distinction as to the franchise or the representatives elected. The member (Indian) for the Bombay Council in the Supreme Legislative Council having resigned, the candidates are Indians and a European. The result should be known by the next week's mail.

I will only give one extract showing how this and municipal representation have been viewed by the most eminent men qualified to speak on such subjects with authority. Delivering a lecture before the Society of Arts, Sir William Wilson Hunter said on the 15th February, 1893:

> The Indian Municipalities to which our Chairman, Lord Ripon, gave so memorable an impulse, had under their administration in 1891 a population of 15,000,000, and of the 10,585 members who sat on their Boards or Councils, more than one-half were elected by the ratepayers. The representative principle is now being cautiously extended under Lord Cross's Act of 1892 to the Legislative Councils both of the Supreme and Provincial Governments.

Portion of the Proclamation of 1858 runs:

> We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, . . . and it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity duly to discharge.

Looking at the new Franchise Bill in the light of these facts, it is very difficult to understand it. The question before the Colonists is very simple. Is it necessary to disfranchise the Indian community? If it is, I submit that the proof of the fact that they enjoy representative institutions in India will not make it less so. If it is not, why harass Indians by ambiguous legislation? If the answer to the question whether or not the Indians enjoy representative institutions in India is to decide the franchise question, I submit that the materials of knowledge about the subject are by no means so slender that the Colonists cannot decide the question now and for ever, without the necessity of an Act leaving it an open question to be decided hereafter in a Court of Law, involving a useless waste of money.

I am, &c.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Natal Witness, 17-4-1896

78. MEMORIAL TO NATAL ASSEMBLY

DURBAN,
April 27, 1896

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE HONOURABLE THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NATAL IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED, PIETERMARITZBURG

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIANS RESIDING IN THIS COLONY

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Memorialists as representing and on behalf of the Indian community in Natal respectfully approach this Honourable House with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill now before you for consideration.

Your Memorialists assume that the Bill is meant chiefly, if not solely, to affect the Indian community in that it repeals and replaces the Act 25 of 1894 which was intended to disfranchise the Indians in the Colony.

In the memorial[1] that was presented to this Honourable House on behalf of the Indian community on the same subject when the Act 25 of 1894 was under consideration, it was contended that the Indians did possess elective representative institutions in India.

The present Bill disfranchises natives of countries, not being of European origin, which have not possessed elective representative institutions in their own native land.

The position of your Memorialists, therefore, is painfully awkward in opposing the present Bill.

Yet, seeing that the Bill tacitly proposes to deal with the Indian franchise, your Memorialists consider it to be their duty respectfully to express their views about the Bill

[1] Memorial dated June 28, p. 92, *supra*.

and also, to show further, on what grounds they believe that the Indians possess elective representative institutions in India.

In moving the second reading of the "India Councils Act (1861) Amendment Bill" in the House of Commons on the 28th day of March, 1892, the then Under-Secretary of State for India, said:

> The object of the Bill, which it is my duty to expound to the House, is to widen the basis and extend the function of the Government of India, to give further opportunity than at present exists to the Non-official and the native element in Indian society to take part in the work of government, and in this way to lend official recognition to that remarkable development, both in political industry and in political capacity, which has been visible among the higher classes of Indian society since the government of India was taken over by the Crown in 1858. This Bill is one to amend the India Councils Act of 1861. Legislative powers of some sort or other, but powers of a somewhat confused character and conflicting validity, have existed in India for a very long time. They existed with the rule of the old East India Company dating from the date of the Charters of the Tudor and Stuart Sovereigns: but the modern legislative system under which India at present exists, owes its origin to the viceroyalty of Lord Canning and to the Secretaryship of State of Sir C. Wood who was afterwards elevated to the peerage. Sir C. Wood, in 1861, carried through the House the India Councils Act of that year. . . . The Act of 1861 constituted three Legislative Councils in India—the Supreme Council of the Viceroy and the Provincial Councils of Madras and Bombay. The Supreme Legislative Council of the Viceroy only consists of the Governor-General and his Executive Council and is recruited by a minimum of six and a maximum of twelve additional members who are nominated by the Governor-General, of whom at least half must be non-official, whether they are drawn from the European or the native element. The Legislative Councils of Madras and Bombay are also recruited by a minimum of four and a maximum of eight additional members, of whom at least half must be non-official. Since the passing of that Act, Legislative Councils have also been called into existence in Bengal and the North-West Provinces. In the case of Bengal, the Council consists of the Lieutenant-Governor and twelve nominated Councillors, and, in the case of the North-West Provinces, of the Lieutenant-Governor and nine no-

> minated Councillors, of whom one-third in each case must be non-official. . . . A number of native gentlemen of intelligence and capacity and public spirit have been persuaded to come forward and to lend their services to the function of government and undoubtedly the standard of merit of these Legislative Councils has stood high.

The Amending Act, besides increasing the number of nominated members in each Council, gives the power of discussing the financial statement every year and the power of "interpellation". *It embodies the elective principle.* The Legislative Councils have from their inception enjoyed the representative character. The Honourable mover of the second reading, with reference to the increase of nominated members, said:

> The object of this addition is very easily stated and will, I think, be very easily understood by the House. It is simply by expanding the area of selection in which case you are adding to the strength of the representative character of the Councils.

But now these Councils, your Memorialists venture to submit, enjoy the representative character "founded on the franchise".

Speaking on an Amendment by Mr. Schwann, M.P. to the Bill to the effect that "no reform of Councils that does not embody the elective principle will be satisfactory", Mr. Curzon said:

> I should like to point out to him that our Bill does not necessarily exclude some such principle as the method of selection, election or delegation. With the permission of the House, I will read the words of the sub-section of Clause I. It runs as follows: "The Governor-General-in-Council may from time to time on the approval of the Secretary of State-in-Council make regulations as to the conditions under which such nominations or any of them shall be made by the Governor-General, Governors and Lieutenant-Governors respectively and prescribe the manner in which such regulations shall be carried into effect. . . ."

Lord Kimberley has expressed himself about that clause. He said:

> I am bound to say that I express my whole satisfaction with regard to this elective principle.

The opinions expressed by Lord Kimberley are shared by the Secretary of State under this Act:

> It would be in the power of the Viceroy to invite representative bodies in India to elect, or select or delegate representatives of those bodies of their opinion to be nominated to these Councils and by elective measures.

The Right Honourable Mr. Gladstone, speaking on the same subject, after explaining the speeches of the Honourable Mover of the second reading of the Bill and its amendment, said:

> I think I may fairly say that the speech of the Under-Secretary appears to me to embody the elective principle in the only sense in which we should expect it to be embodied. . . . It is evident that the great question—and it is one of great and profound interest—before the House is that of the introduction of the elective element into the Government of India. What I wish is that their first steps shall be of a genuine nature and that whatever scope they give to the elective principle shall be real; there is no difference of principle. I think that the acceptance of the elective principle by the honourable gentleman (Mr. Curzon) though guarded was not otherwise than a frank acceptance.

Turning to the Regulations made and published in accordance with the above Act, your Memorialists submit that the remarks hereinbefore quoted are fully borne out. To take the Bombay Legislative Council, for instance, out of the eighteen nominated members, eight are elected by, or as it is put in the Regulations, "nominated on the recommendation" of the various representative bodies which are enfranchised for the purpose of Legislative Councils. The Corporation of Bombay (itself an elective body), Municipal Corporations other than the Bombay Corporation in the Bombay Presidency prescribed by the Governor-in-Council, District Local Boards prescribed as above, the Sardars of the Deccan or other class of large landholders prescribed as above, Associations of merchants, tradesmen, etc. prescribed as above, and the Senate of the University of Bombay recommend or elect these eight members by a majority of votes or in the case of Asso-

ciations not established by law in the manner laid down in their rules for carrying resolutions or recording decisions upon questions of business brought before such Associations.

In the Sardars of the Deccan, this Honourable House will notice, there are even direct voters for the election of members of the Council.

The regulations for the other Councils are much the same.

Such is the character of the Legislative Councils in India and the political franchise. The difference, therefore, your Memorialists beg respectfully to point out, is not one of kind but of degree only. The reason is not because the Indians do not know or understand the representative principle. Your Memorialists cannot do better than quote again from the speech of the Right Honourable Mr. Gladstone, partly quoted above; he thus explained the reasons for the restrictive character of the elective principle:

> Her Majesty's Government ought to understand that it will be regarded as a most grave disappointment if, after all the assurances we have received that an attempt will be made to bring into operation this powerful engine of Government (i.e., the elective principle), there should not be some result such as we anticipate from their action. I do not speak of its amount, I speak more of its quality. In an Asiatic country like India, with its ancient civilization, with its institutions so peculiar, with such a diversity of races, religions and pursuits, with such an enormous extent of country, and such a multitude of human beings as probably except in China were never before under a single Government, I can understand that there should be difficulties in carrying out what we desire to see accomplished. But great as the difficulties are the task is a noble one, and will require the utmost prudence and care in conducting it to a successful consummation. All these things induce us to look forward cheerfully to a great future for India, and to expect that a real success will attend the genuine application, even though it may be a limited one, of the elective principle to the government of that vast and almost immeasurable country.

The opinion of those who are qualified to speak on Indian subjects seems to be unanimous as to the representative character of the Indian Councils.

Sir William Wilson Hunter, the greatest living authority on Indian subjects, says:

> The representative principle is now being cautiously extended, under Lord Cross's Act of 1892, to the Legislative Councils both of the Supreme and the Provincial Governments.

The Times dealing with the Indian franchise in Natal, says:

> The argument, that the Indian in Natal cannot claim higher privileges than he enjoys in India, and that he has no franchise whatever in India, is inconsistent with the facts. The Indian has precisely the same franchise in India which the Englishman enjoys.

After dealing with the Municipal franchise the article goes on to say:

> A similar principle applies, with the modifications incidental to our system of government in India, to what may be called the Higher Electorate. The elected members of the Supreme and the Legislative Councils, which deal with 221 millions of British subjects are mainly elected by Native bodies. Apart from the official representatives of Government in the Supreme and Provincial Legislatures about one-half the members are Natives. It would be wrong to push this analogy too far. But it answers the argument against allowing British Indian subjects a vote in British Colonies on the ground that they have no vote in India. So far as government by voting exists in India, Englishmen and Indians stand on the same footing, and alike in the Municipal, the Provincial and the Supreme Councils, the Native interests are powerfully represented.

The Municipal franchise is very broad in India, and almost the whole of British India is studded by Municipal Corporations and Local Boards.

Speaking of the class of Indians already on the Voters' Rolls in Natal, *The Times* article, referred to above, says:

> It is precisely this class of men who form the most valued element in the municipal and other electorates in India. Throughout the 750 municipalities of India the British and the Native voters have equal rights, and 9,790 Municipal Commissioners [Councillors] in 1891 were Natives as against 839 Europeans. The European vote on the

Indian Municipal Boards was therefore only one to 8 Indian votes, while in the Natal Electorate there are 37 European votes to one British Indian. . . . It must be remembered that Indian Municipalities administer a population of 15 millions and an expenditure of 50 million rupees.

As to the acquaintance of the Indian with the nature and responsibilities of representative institutions, the same article says:

There is probably no other country in the world in which representative institutions have penetrated so deeply into the life of the people. Every caste, every trade, every village in India had for ages its council of five which practically legislated for and conducted the administration of the little community, which it represented. Until the introduction of the Parish Councils' Act last year, there was no such rural system of self-administration even in England.

Mr. Schwann, M.P., on the same subject says:

Do not suppose that the question of election is a new one in India. . . . There is no question which is more specially Indian than the question of election. Most of our civilization has come from India. And there is not the slightest doubt that we ourselves are practising a development of the Eastern principle of election.

Under such circumstances the Indian community whom the Bill is intended to affect find it most difficult to understand it.

Your Memorialists submit that the vagueness and ambiguity of the Bill are very undesirable and fair neither to the European community nor the Indian. They leave both in a state of suspense which is painful to the latter.

Your Memorialists respectfully draw the attention of this Honourable House to the fact that according to the present Voters' Roll, there is one Indian to every 38 Europeans, and that the Indian voters belong to the most respectable element in that community and are residents of long standing with large stakes in the Colony.

It is said, however, that the present List is no guide to what proportions the Indian vote may assume in future. But the fact that, during the two years that the disfranchisement of the Indian community has been threatened, no

more Indians have had their names placed on the Voters' Roll, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, sufficiently disposes of the argument.

The truth is, and your Memorialists venture to speak from personal experience, there are not very many Indians in the Colony who have got the legal property qualification, low as it is.

Your Memorialists respectfully submit that the Bill under discussion is open to more objections than one. In your Memorialists' humble opinion, it introduces the colour distinction in a most invidious manner. For, while natives of other countries not enjoying elective representative institutions may not become voters, natives of the States of Europe, even though they may not enjoy such institutions in the countries they come from, may become voters under the General Franchise Law of the Colony.

It would make the sons of non-European women of questionable reputation eligible as voters so long as the father is a European, while it would prevent the son of a European lady of noble birth, should she choose to marry a nobleman belonging to a non-European race, from becoming a voter under the General Franchise Law of the Colony.

Assuming that the Indians come under the scope of the Bill, the method by which they may get themselves placed on the Voters' Roll will be a source of constant irritation to the Indian community, and may give rise to a system of favouritism and cause serious dissensions among the members of the Indian community.

The Bill is moreover calculated to involve the Indian community in endless litigation in order to enable them to vindicate their rights, which your Memorialists think, are capable of definition without any recourse to the law-courts of the Colony.

Above all, it will transfer the agitation from the hands of the Europeans, who now wish to see the Indians

disfranchised, into those of the Indian community. And the agitation, your Memorialists fear, has to be perpetual.

It is most humbly submitted that such a state of things is very undesirable in the interests of all the communities inhabiting this Colony.

Your Memorialists, after a careful investigation for over a year, have ventured to come to the conclusion that the fear about the Indian vote swamping the European is absolutely imaginary, and, therefore, fervently pray and venture to hope that this Honourable House, before assenting to any Bill specially restrictive of the Indian vote, or directly or indirectly introducing any colour distinction, would institute an inquiry into the real state of affairs which would show how many resident Indians there are in this Colony who possess the legal property qualification necessary for being placed on the Voters' Roll.

And for this act of justice and mercy, your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, &c. &c.

(SD) ABDUL CAREEM HAJEE ADAM
AND OTHERS

From a photostat of a printed copy.

79. *TELEGRAM TO DADABHAI NAOROJI*

Text of a telegram sent to Dadabhai Naoroji, Sir William Hunter and, also, to Mr Chamberlain.

DURBAN,
May 7, 1896

INDIAN COMMUNITY EARNESTLY REQUEST YOU NOT TO ACCEPT NATAL FRANCHISE BILL OR MINISTERIAL ALTERATION THERETO PROPOSED LAST NIGHT MEMORIAL[1] PREPARING.

From Colonial Office Records No. 179, Vol. 196

[1] *Vide* p. 324, *infra*.

80. THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

DURBAN,
May 14, 1896

TO

THE HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

You are reported to have said the following with reference to the Natal Indian Congress on the Second Reading of the Franchise Bill:

> Members might not be aware that there was in this country a body, a very powerful body in its way, a very united body, though practically a secret body—he meant the Indian Congress.

May I venture to enquire if that portion of your speech is correctly reported, and if so, whether there are any grounds for the belief that the Congress is "practically a secret body"? I may be permitted to draw your attention to the fact that when the intention of forming such a body was made it was announced in the papers, that when it was actually formed its formation was noticed by the *Witness*, that the annual report and list of members and rules have been supplied to and commented upon by the Press, and that these papers have also been supplied to the Government by me in my capacity as Honorary Secretary to the Congress.

I have the honour to remain,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
SD. M. K. GANDHI
HONORARY SECRETARY OF
THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

From a copy in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya.

81. *THE NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS*

DURBAN,
May 18, 1896

C. BIRD, ESQ.
PRINCIPAL UNDER-SECRETARY
COLONIAL OFFICE
PIETERMARITZBURG

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter 2837/96, dated the 16th instant, in reply to my letter to the Honourable the Prime Minister with reference to the Natal Indian Congress.

I beg to state with regard to the matter that the Congress meetings are held always with open doors, and they are open to the Press and public. Certain European gentlemen who, the Congress members thought, might be interested in the meetings, were specially invited. One gentleman did accept the invitation and attend a Congress meeting. Uninvited European visitors also have attended the Congress meetings once or twice.

One of the Congress rules provides that Europeans may be invited to become Vice-Presidents. According thereto, two gentlemen were asked if they would accept the honour, but they were not disposed to do so. Minutes of the Congress proceedings are regularly kept.

I beg to remain,
Sir,
your obedient servant,
SD. M. K. GANDHI
HONORARY SECRETARY
NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

From a copy in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya.

82. *EXPENSES FOR THE TEST CASE*

PRETORIA,
May 18, 1896

HIS HONOUR
THE BRITISH AGENT
PRETORIA

SIR,

With reference to the interview you were good enough to grant with reference to the British Indians in this Republic, whereat I ventured to submit that, in the event of a test case being brought by the Indian community here as to the interpretation of the Law No. 3 of 1885, the expenses should be paid by Her Majesty's Government, I have to request you on behalf of the deputation to telegraph to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies as to whether Her Majesty's Government would defray the cost of the conduct of the case. The following are the grounds for such request:

1. The test case has been rendered necessary owing to the award of the Chief Justice of the Free State and the arbitration was agreed to by Her Majesty's Government without reference to the feeling on the matter of the Indian community in the Transvaal whose interests were at stake, and in spite of their respectful protest as well against the choice of the arbitrator (Blue book C. 7911 of 1895, p. 35, paragraph 3).

2. The Telegraphic despatches published in the above Blue book, pp. 34 (No. 9) and 46 (Enclosure in No. 12), show that Her Majesty's Government contemplated bringing a test case. While the case will be entered in the name of a member of the Indian community, it is, I submit, reasonable to infer that the cost will be defrayed by Her Majesty's Government.

3. The British Indians have already incurred heavy expenses in their struggle against degradation and disabilities sought to be placed upon them in the Transvaal in spite of the protection afforded them against such degradation and disabilities by the 14th article of the Convention of 1884, and, comparatively speaking, their pecuniary position is not such as to bear any strain put upon their purse. I venture to hope that in your telegram you would mention a summary of the grounds on which the request as to costs is based.

Personally and on behalf of the deputation you were kind enough to receive to-day, I beg once more to tender my thanks for the courteous manner in which you received us and the patient, sympathetic hearing you granted us.

On behalf of the deputation,

I have, etc.,

(SD.) M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure in Despatch of 25th May, 1897, from H. M.'s. High Commissioner in Cape Town to the Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

83. MEMORIAL TO MR. CHAMBERLAIN

DURBAN,
May 22, 1896

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN,
HER MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES, LONDON

THE MEMORIAL OF THE UNDERSIGNED INDIAN BRITISH SUBJECTS RESIDING IN THE COLONY OF NATAL

HUMBLY SHEWETH:

That your Memorialists hereby respectfully beg to lay before Your Honour the following for your consideration with regard to the Franchise Law Amendment Bill

introduced by the Natal Government in the Natal Legislative Assembly, which was read a third time on the 13th day of May, 1896, with certain amendments.

The following is the text of the Bill as it appeared in the *Natal Government Gazette* dated the 3rd March, 1896:

To amend the Law relating to the Franchise:

Whereas it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Franchise,

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Natal, as follows:

1. Act No. 25, 1894, shall be and the same is hereby repealed.

2. Save those who come under the operation of Section 3 of this Act, no persons shall be qualified to have their names inserted in any List of Electors or in any Voters' Roll, or to vote as Electors within the meaning of Section 22 of the Constitution Act of 1893, or of any Law relating to the election of members of the Legislative Assembly, who (not being of European origin) are Natives, or descendants in the male line of Natives, of countries which have not hitherto possessed *elective representative institutions*, unless they shall first obtain an order from the Governor in Council exempting them from the operation of this Act.

3. The provisions of Section 2 of this Act shall not apply to persons of the class mentioned in that Section whose names are rightly contained in any Voters' Roll in force at the date of the promulgation of this Act, and who are otherwise competent and qualified as electors.

The Act repealed by Section 1 of the above Bill is as follows:

Whereas it is expedient to amend the Law relating to the Franchise and to except therefrom persons belonging to Asiatic races not accustomed to the exercise of franchise rights under parliamentary institutions,

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Natal, as follows:

1. Save as in Section 2 of this Act excepted, persons of Asiatic extraction shall not be qualified to have their names inserted in any List of Electors or in any Voters' Roll, or to vote as Electors within the meaning of Section 22 of the Constitution Act of 1893, or of any Law relating to the election of members of the Legislative Assembly.

2. The provisions of Section 1 of this Act shall not apply to persons of the class mentioned in that Section whose names are rightly contained in any Voters' Roll in force at the date of the promulgation of this Act, and who are otherwise competent and qualified as electors.

3. This Act shall not come into operation unless and until the Governor notifies by Proclamation in the *Natal Government Gazette* that it is Her Majesty's pleasure not to disallow the same, and thereafter it shall come into operation upon such day as the Governor shall notify by the same or any other Proclamation.

A memorial[1] setting forth the views of the Indian community in reference to the Bill under discussion was presented to the Legislative Assembly on the 28th day of April, 1896. A copy thereof is hereto annexed marked A.

On the 6th day of May, 1896, the Bill was read a second time. During the course of his speech, the Prime Minister, the Honourable Sir John Robinson, said that the Ministers had taken steps to ascertain whether you would be agreeable to an insertion in the aforesaid Bill of the words "founded on the franchise" after "elective representative institutions", and that you were so agreeable.

Thereupon, on the 7th day of May, 1896, your Memorialists sent to Your Honour a cablegram to the following effect:

> The Indian community earnestly request you not to accept Natal Franchise Bill or Ministerial alteration thereof proposed last night; memorial preparing.

In Committee, however, the Honourable Sir John Robinson announced on the 11th day of May, 1896, that Your Honour had agreed to a further addition, viz., 'Parliamentary' between 'the' and 'franchise'.

The Bill, therefore, as to representative institutions would now read "Elective representative institutions *founded on the Parliamentary franchise.*"

Your Memorialists humbly venture to think that the present Bill, so far as the Indian community and, in-

[1] Memorial dated April 27, 1896, *vide* p. 312, *supra*.

deed, all the communities are concerned, is worse than the Act it repeals.

Your Memorialists, therefore, feel aggrieved that you have been pleased to approve of the Bill, but they trust that the facts and arguments placed before you hereinbelow are such as would induce you to reconsider your views.

Your Memorialists have all along contended that the Indians did enjoy "elective representative institutions" in India. But the papers published in connection with the Franchise question seem to show that you do not think that the Indians possess such institutions. With the greatest deference to Your Honour's view, your Memorialists crave leave to draw your attention to the extracts quoted in the annexure A upholding the opposite view.

Your approval of the present Bill, coupled with the view held by Your Honour regarding "elective representative institutions" in India, places the Indian community in Natal in a very painful and awkward position.

Your Memorialists venture to submit:

1. That no legislation restrictive of the Indian franchise in Natal is necessary.

2. That, if there be any doubt with regard to this point, an enquiry should be first instituted as to whether such a necessity does exist.

3. That, assuming that the necessity exists, the present Bill is not calculated to meet the difficulty in a straightforward and open manner.

4. That, if Her Majesty's Government are absolutely satisfied that the necessity exists and that no Bill could be conceived that would solve the difficulty without a resort to class legislation, it is better that in any Franchise Bill the Indians should be specially named.

5. That the present Bill is likely to give rise to endless litigation owing to its ambiguity and vagueness.

6. That it would involve the Indian community in

expenses almost beyond their control.

7. That assuming the Bill affects the Indian community, the method provided in the Bill whereby any member thereof may be exempted from its operation is, your Memorialists respectfully submit, arbitrary, unfair, and likely to create dissensions among the members of the Indian community.

8. That the Bill, like the Act repealed, makes an invidious distinction between Europeans and others.

Your Memorialists humbly submit that the present condition of the Voters' List in Natal renders it absolutely unnecessary to embark on any legislation to restrict the Indian Franchise. There seems to be needless hurry about passing a measure that affects a large portion of Her Majesty's subjects. It is admitted that as against 9,309 European voters there are only 251 Indian voters; 201 are either traders or clerks, assistants, schoolmasters, &c., and 50 are gardeners and others, and that most of these voters are settlers of long standing. These figures, your Memorialists submit, do not warrant any restrictive legislation. The Bill under discussion is intended to deal with a remote and probable and possible danger. A danger is really assumed which does not exist. His Honour, Sir John Robinson, in moving the second reading of the Bill, based his fears about the danger of the European vote being swamped by the Indian vote on three grounds, viz.,

1. The fact that the petition to Her Majesty's Government in connection with the Franchise Act, repealed by the present Bill, was signed by nearly 9,000 Indians.

2. The approaching general election in the Colony.

3. The existence of the Natal Indian Congress.

As to the first ground, even in the correspondence on the subject, the Natal Government have argued that the 9,000 signatories wanted to be placed on the Voters' Roll. The first paragraph of that petition is a sufficient answer to the argument. The Petitioners, your Memorial-

ists humbly submit, never contended for any such thing. They certainly protested against the wholesale disfranchisement of the Indians. Your Memorialists humbly venture to think that every Indian, whether he had the property qualifications or not, was very materially affected by that Bill. Your Memorialists admit that the fact shows a degree of organizing power among the Indians, alluded to by the Hon. Mover, but your Memorialists respectfully contend that no matter how powerful the organizing power might be, it cannot overcome the natural barriers. Out of the 9,000 signatories not a hundred, besides those who were already on the Voters' Roll, possessed the legal property qualifications.

With regard to the second ground, the Hon. Mover said:

> He might remind members that before long there must be a general election, and they would have to consider upon what register that general election was to take place. It was not for him to say how many Indian electors might or might not be on the ensuing electoral roll, but the Government thought it was high time that no further delay should take place in seizing this question by the throat and *settling it once for all*, without further delay.

Your Memorialists submit, with all due respect to the Hon. Mover, that all these fears have no foundation in fact. According to the *Report of the Protector of Immigrants for 1895*, out of 46,343 Indians in the Colony, only 30,303 are free Indians. To that may be added the trading Indian population of, say, 5,000. Thus there are only 35,000 Indians, as against over 45,000 Europeans, who can at all compete with the latter. The 16,000 indentured Indians, it is easy to see, never can, while they are under indenture. But a large majority of the 30,303 are only a stage higher than the indentured Indians. And your Memorialists venture to say from personal experience that there are in this Colony thousands of Indians who do not pay £10 per year in rents. In fact, there are thousands who have to drag on their

existence on that amount. Where then, your Memorialists ask, is the fear of the Indians swamping the Voters' List next year?

The disfranchisement has been threatened for the last two years. The Electoral Roll has twice undergone revision since. The Indians had every incentive to add to the Indian vote, lest many may be shut out. And yet there has been not a single addition to the Voters' List from the Indian community.

But the Hon. Mover went on to say:

> Members might not be aware that there was in this country a body, a very powerful body in its way, a very united body, though practically a secret body—he meant the Indian Congress. That was a body which possessed large funds, it was a body presided over by very active and very able men, and it was a body the avowed object of which was to exercise strong political power in the affairs of the Colony.

Your Memorialists venture to say that this estimate of the Congress is not justified by facts. The charge of secrecy, as would appear from the correspondence between the Honourable the Prime Minister of Natal and the Honorary Secretary of the Congress, was made under an erroneous impression (Appendices B,C,D.[1]). A statement with regard to the matter also was made by him in the Legislative Assembly on the 20th instant.

Nor has the Congress in any shape or form intended or attempted to "exercise strong political power". The following are the objects of the Congress, which were published in almost every paper in South Africa last year:

"1. To bring about a better understanding and promote friendliness between the Europeans and the Indians residing in the Colony.

2. To spread information about India and the Indians by writing to newspapers, publishing pamphlets, lecturing &c.

3. To educate the Indians, especially [those] born in the

[1] *Vide* pp. 321, 322, *supra*.

Colony, about Indian History, and induce them to study Indian subjects.

4. To ascertain the various grievances the Indians are labouring under and to agitate by resorting to all constitutional methods for removing them.

5. To enquire into the condition of the indentured Indians and to help them out of special hardships.

6. To help the poor and the needy in all reasonable ways.

7. And generally to do everything that would tend to put the Indians on a better footing morally, socially, intellectually, and politically."

It would thus appear that the object of the Congress is to resist degradation, not to gain political power. As to funds, the Congress has a property worth £1,080 and a balance of £148 7s. 8d. in the Bank, at the time of writing this. These funds have to be used in charity, printing memorials and working expenses. In your Memorialists' humble opinion they are hardly sufficient to fulfil the objects of the Congress. The educational work is greatly hampered owing to want of funds. Your Memorialists, therefore, venture to submit that the danger which the present Bill is intended to guard against does not exist at all.

Your Memorialists, however, do not request Her Majesty's Government to accept the above facts as correct on their *ipse dixit*. If there is any doubt about any of them—and the most important fact is that there are thousands who do not possess the necessary property qualifications for becoming voters—then the proper course, your Memorialists submit, is to enquire about them, particularly to enquire how many Indians there are in the Colony who possess immovable property of the value of £50 or who pay a yearly rent of £10. To prepare such a return would neither cost much time nor much money, and would be a very material help towards a satisfactory solution of the Franchise question. The hot haste to pass *some* measure is, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, detrimental to the best interests of the Colony

as a whole. Your Memorialists, so far as they, as representatives of the Indian community, are concerned and speaking authoritatively for the organization of which they have the honour to be members, hereby beg to assure Her Majesty's Government that they have no intention to endeavour to place a single Indian voter on the Voters' List for the general election next year.

The Government organ, dealing with the present Bill in a presumably inspired article, supports the view that the danger is "a chimerical one". It says:

> Moreover, we feel sure that should the Asiatic vote ever endanger the stability of European rule in this Colony, the Imperial Government will find ways and means out of such a difficulty. The new Bill imposes certain limitations on the acquirement of the franchise by all who are not of European origin, and as now even with the franchise open to British subjects of all races and classes, except the natives under native law, there are only some 250 Indians on the Voters' Roll out of a total of 9,560 registered voters, or in the proportion of one Indian voter to every 38 Europeans in possession of the Franchise, we think the new Bill will fully meet the requirements of the case for very many long years at all events, if not for all time. In South Carolina, for instance, the negroes over 21 years old number 132,949, while the Whites over 21 only number 102,567, yet the Whites have retained the dominant power, although in the minority. The fact of the matter is that apart from numbers altogether the superior race will always hold the reins of Government. *We are inclined to the belief, therefore, that the danger of the Indian vote swamping the European* is *a chimerical one.* From what we know of the matter, we are inclined to think that it will be held that India is a country possessing "elective representative institutions". In fact, the argument so often advanced that the Indian is unacquainted with their nature and responsibilities is really wide of the mark, as in India there are some 750 municipalities in which British and native voters have equal rights, and in 1891, there were 9,790 native municipal commissioners [councillors] as against 839 Europeans. . . . Even assuming, however, that natives of India will be held as coming from a country possessing "elective representative institutions", *we do not consider that the danger of being swamped is at all a likely one, as past experience has proved that the class of Indians coming here, as a rule, do not concern themselves about the*

franchise, and, further, that the majority of them do not even possess the small property qualification required. In addition to all this, the obligations of the Empire of which we form a part, do not permit of Indians as Indians being excluded from the exercise of such a privilege as the franchise. So far as we are concerned, therefore, such an attitude is a *non possumus* and may, therefore, be dropped. Should the restrictions of the new Law not prevent the introduction of an undesirable element on to the Voters' Roll, there is nothing at all to prevent us raising the franchise qualification. At present it is very low. The property qualification could, therefore, be easily increased, even doubled, and an educational test imposed which,while it would not remove a single European from the Voters' Roll, would have a sweeping effect on Indian voters. The number of the latter possessing immovable property of the value of, say, £100 or paying a rent of £20 per annum and able to read and write English must be exceedingly small, and should this fail, there would be nothing to hinder us from adopting the Misssisippi plan, or a modification of it to suit the circumstances. (5th March, 1896)

It is clear, therefore, that according to the Government organ the present property qualifications are sufficiently high to prevent any undue influx of Indian voters on the Roll, and that the only object of the present Bill is to harass the Indian community—to land them in expensive litigation.

According to the *Mauritius Almanac* for 1895, the population of that island in 1894 was 259,224 Indians as against 106,995 persons under the heading 'general population'. The franchise qualification there is as follows:

Every male person shall be entitled to be registered in any year as a voter for any electoral district, and when registered, to vote at the election of a member of the Council for such district who is qualified as follows, that is to say:

1. That he has attained the age of twenty-one years.
2. Is under no legal incapacity.
3. Is a British subject by birth or naturalization.
4. Has resided in the Colony for three years at least previous to the date of registration and possesses some one of the following qualifications:

(*a*) Is on the 1st day of January in each year, and has, during the preceding six calendar months, been the owner of immovable

property within such district of the annual value of Rs. 300 or the monthly value of Rs. 25 above all charges and encumbrances affecting the same.

(*b*) Is at the date of registration paying, and has for the six calendar months previous to the 1st day of January in such year paid, rent in respect of immovable property situate within such district at the rate of at least Rs. 25 per month.

(*c*) Has for three calender months previous to the 1st of January in such year resided, or had his principal place of business or employment within such district, and is the owner of movable property within the Colony of the value of at least Rs. 3,000.

(*d*) Is the husband of a wife, or the eldest son of a widow, possessing any one of the above qualifications.

(*e*) Has for three calendar months previous to the 1st day of January in such year resided, or had his principal place of business or employment within such district, and is in receipt of a yearly salary of at least Rs. 600, or a monthly salary of at least Rs. 50.

(*f*) Has for three calendar months previous to the 1st of January in such year resided, or has his principal place of business or employment within such district, and pays licence duty to the amount of at least Rs. 50 per annum.

Provided—

1. That no person shall be registered as a voter, or be entitled to vote for the election of a member of the Council who has been convicted of perjury in any Court in Our Dominions or who has been sentenced by any such Court to death, or penal servitude, or imprisonment with hard labour, or for a term exceeding twelve months, and has not either suffered the punishment to which he was sentenced or such other punishment as by competent authority may have been substituted for the same or received a free pardon from us.

2. That no person shall be registered as a voter in any year who has, within twelve calendar months immediately preceding the first day of January in that year, received any relief from public or parochial funds.

3. That no person shall be registered as a voter in any year unless he shall, in the presence of the registering officer or of a magistrate, with his own hand subscribe his name to his claim to be registered and write thereon the date of such subscription and the qualification in respect of which he claims to be registered.

> 4. That no person claiming to be registered in the district in which he resides in respect of either of the qualification (*c*), (*d*), (*e*) and (*f*), shall be registered in respect of the same qualification in the district in which he has his principal place of business or employment or *vice versa*.

With these qualifications there is evidently no trouble in Mauritius, although the Indian population is twice as large as the general population, and the Indians in Mauritius belong to the same class as the Indians in Natal. Only, there they are far more prosperous than their Natal brethren.

Assuming, however, that the necessity to deal with the Indian franchise does exist, your Memorialists respectfully beg to say that the present Bill is not calculated to meet it in a straightforward and open manner. The Honourable and learned Attorney-General of Natal, referring to a suggestion to slightly alter the existing law in course of the debate on the second reading, is reported to have said:

> The reason why he refused to do this was because it was apparently doing it by a side-wind and quietly, and the Government intended to do it in the full light of day.

It is difficult to conceive a better mode of doing a thing by a "side-wind and quietly" than that of passing the present Bill, which leaves everybody in the dark. *The Natal Advertiser* of the 8th May, 1896, says:

> . . . What is the present Bill if not a side-wind? Its whole object is to endeavour quietly and by a side-wind to effect that which the measure of last session failed to accomplish. Mr. Escombe admitted that that measure was brutally blunt and to this he rightly ascribed its failure to obtain acceptance by the Imperial Government. He further admitted that the present Bill has precisely the same object in view as the "brutal" Bill, only it does not state its object honestly and straightforwardly; in other words, it seeks quietly and by a side-wind to reach the goal apparently unattainable by plain sailing.

If Her Majesty's Government are convinced that a real necessity exists for legislation restricting the Indian franchise in Natal, and if Her Majesty's Government are satisfied

that the question cannot be dealt with but by class legislation, and if Her Majesty's Government further accept the Colonial view that Indian British subjects, in spite of the gracious Proclamation of 1858, may be treated on a different footing from that on which the European British subjects are treated, then, your Memorialists submit that it would be infinitely better and more satisfactory to exclude the Indians by name from any rights and privileges that they, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, should not be allowed to enjoy, than that by ambiguous legislation the door should be left open for litigation and trouble.

That the Bill, if assented to, would give rise to endless litigation owing to its ambiguity is an admitted fact. It is admittedly also of the first importance that the question of the Indian franchise should be "settled once for all", to quote the words of the Honourable the Prime Minister of Natal. And yet, in the opinion of the majority of the leaders of opinion in Natal, the Bill will not settle the question once for all.

Mr. Binns, the leader of the Opposition in the Natal Assembly, after quoting chapter and verse to show that the Indians in India did possess elective representative institutions, founded on the Parliamentary franchise, is reported to have said this:

> He hoped he had shown clearly that on that ground this Bill was wrong. There were representative institutions and the elective principle was acknowledged in India. They had a Parliamentary franchise and there was an enormous municipal franchise which affected local government, and if this was the case, what was the use of their passing this Bill! The facts he had stated to the Assembly were taken from the best authorities he could find and they proved most conclusively that these institutions did exist. There was no doubt on one point, that if a Bill of this kind passed into law *it would lead them into endless litigation, difficulties, and trouble. The Bill was not sufficiently clear or definite.* They wanted something more clear and definite. He wanted to see this question settled and he would do all he could to assist at a settlement. But he thought *this Bill was framed on wrong lines,* contained a fact that was *not*

correct, and it would lead them into endless litigation, difficulty, and trouble. It would be impossible for him to vote for the second reading of this Bill.

Mr. Bale, a leading member of the Assembly and a leading lawyer in Natal, agreeing with Mr. Binns's views, opposed as he is to the Indians retaining the franchise right under the general law of the Colony, thus feelingly appealed to the House, as well on behalf of the Indians as for the Colony generally, not to pass the Bill:

> *It would give rise to litigation and produce a feeling of hostility and create a ferment amongst the Indians themselves.* It would also have the further effect of inducing appeals to the Privy Council and would prejudice the election of members to this House. Having regard to the great issues involved in this measure he hoped the second reading of this Bill would not be carried.

The Natal Witness of the 8th May thus sums up the situation:

> Our warning that, if the Bill passes into law as it stands, the Colony will be involved in serious litigation, had the support of Mr. Binns and Mr. Bale, and Mr. Smythe's half loaf, which is better than nothing, would be dearly purchased at that price. What leads us to think that the Bill has not been considered by the legal advisers of the Crown are the exceedingly delicate questions which it raises and which will undoubtedly be fought out unless the wording be altered so as not to leave the possibility of a resort to law. Amongst these questions are the following: Can a Colony make laws which contravene the Naturalization Law of England? Are British Indians British subjects or not? In other words *the Bill raises the whole question of the position of British India in the Empire.* Can special laws be passed in Natal, since the issue of the Proclamation of 1858, [*to*] take away any part of the privileges conferred by that document?

After deploring the ambiguity and vagueness of the Bill, *The Natal Advertiser*, in its leader of the 8th May, says:

> The truth of the position is [that] each line of the present Bill is an ambuscade of disputes, which will all come out in the open some day, to perpetuate for years, and probably with increased bitterness, the struggle between the Indians and the Europeans in this Colony with regard to the vote.

Your Memorialists appeal to Her Majesty's Government to save the Indian community, if not the whole Colony, from such a dismal outlook—from perpetual agitation—and all this to avoid a danger that does not exist.

That the expenses of such a struggle to the Indian community must be beyond their control needs no argument to prove. The whole struggle is unequal.

Now, assuming further, that the highest legal tribunal has recorded its opinion that the Indians do not possess "elective representative institutions founded on the Parliamentary franchise", the method provided in the Bill whereby the Indians may be placed on the Voters' Roll is, in your Memorialists' humble opinion, in every way unsatisfactory.

The disapproval of that portion of the Bill which confers the power on the Governor is very emphatic on the part of the Europeans also. *The Natal Witness*, in dealing with that branch of the subject, says:

> . . . It attacks great constitutional principles, and further introduces into the working of representative institutions in Natal what may be termed an unknown quantity—that is to say, the effect which the third clause, providing for an electorate of six to choose fit and proper Asiatics for the Voters' Roll, will have upon them. . . . The Ministry appeared to have caught on to the idea (i.e., of indirect election), but in making themselves and the Governor an indirect electorate, they are not only doing what is decidedly preposterous but highly improper.

Reverting to the same question again, it says:

> The Assembly has not gained in public estimation by passing a Bill which most of the leading members are distrustful of, which they can see is a compromise and a compromise which may prove quite ineffectual and which, as we pointed when it was first published, is a most dangerous invasion of the privileges of the Assembly as well as an attack upon constitutional principles which it might have been assumed that every member would have held himself to be under a solemn obligation to maintain unimpaired. There was no need to remind some of the members of the last objection. Mr. Bale said that the Franchise ought not to be vested in the Governor and Ministry, being a power which ought to be vested

in the people alone, to be exercised of course by their representatives. . . . But what the Press is concerned about is not the present Parliament but all future ones. . . . When a great constitutional principle is once broken through, however slightly it may be, there is the imminent risk of the breach being widened by a Government greedy of power.

That is the objection from the European point of view. Your Memorialists, while agreeing with that view, have a yet more formidable objection to the principle of the Clause. It is not so much the number of Indian voters that the Indian community wish to see on the Voters' Roll as the vindication of their rights and privileges as British subjects and the equal *status* with European British subjects that is assured to the British Indians by Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen Empress on more occasions than one, and that has been specially assured to the Indian community in Natal by Her Majesty's Government in a special despatch by the Right Honourable the late Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies. If other British subjects having certain qualifications can claim the franchise as of right, why, your Memorialists humbly ask, should not the Indian British subjects?

The method is cumbrous and will tend to keep up the franchise agitation for ever. It would, moreover, transfer the agitation from the Europeans to the Indians. The speeches in the Assembly on the second reading show that the power will be exercised very sparingly, if at all, by the Governor-in-Council.

It is calculated to create dissensions among the Indian community, for the applicant who is rejected may resent the favour granted to a brother applicant if the one considers himself as good as the other.

Education, intelligence, and stake, are mentioned in Your Honour's despatch relating to the franchise question as entitling the Indians to the franchise. Your Memorialists submit that if a certain amount of education, intelligence

or stake, is to be sufficient to qualify an Indian to become a voter in the Colony, then such a test could be introduced instead of leaving the power in the hands of the Governor-in-Council. Hereon, your Memorialists beg to draw your attention to a portion of the leading article in *The Natal Mercury* hereinbefore quoted. If the necessary qualifications for those coming under the operation of that Bill were stated, it would do away with the contentious character of that part of the Bill, and those coming under its operation will then know exactly what qualifications would entitle them to a vote. The position is well summed up in *The Natal Advertiser* of the 8th May:

> A still further proof of the duplicity of the present Bill lies in its provision that the Governor-in-Council shall have the power to place certain Indians on the Voters' Roll. This clause is obviously inserted with the idea of leading the Imperial Government to suppose that this power of exemption would occasionally be used—sparingly perhaps, but still used. Yet the Attorney-General declared that "the power for inclusion given in such circumstances under the present Bill could not, however, he wished to point out, be attained, except through the Governor-in-Council. Every section of the community had begun to realize what the true meaning was of the responsibility of Ministers and knew quite well that no Ministers could hold office for fourteen days if they took upon themselves the responsibility of watering the constituencies by the introduction of Indian electors." Further on he said, "there would be no other voice throughout South Africa than that the electoral rolls of the country should be absolutely confined to persons of the European race. That was the starting point from which they began and the goal they had in view all along." . . . If these ministerial declarations mean anything, it is that this Government have no intention to exercise their right of exemption. Then why is it placed on the Bill? Is there not at least an appearance of dissembling, or utilizing a side-wind, if the phrase is more expressive, in inserting a provision in a measure, which its framers declare in submitting it for adoption, they mean to treat as a dead letter?

It would be hardly pleasant for a wealthy Indian merchant to have to apply for a permit to be exempted from the operation of the Bill and also to risk the rejection of

his application. It is difficult to understand why Europeans, not coming from countries which have not hitherto possessed elective representative institutions founded on the Parliamentary franchise, should exercise the right of voting, while the non-Europeans similarly placed cannot under the general law of the Colony.

The present Bill, according to the view of the Government, is an experimental measure. "If," said the Honourable and learned Attorney-General on the second reading, "contrary to their belief, and their firm belief, the Bill should fall short of what was intended, then there never would be rest in the Colony," &c. The Bill, therefore, is not finite. Under such circumstances, your Memorialists submit that unless all the resources, without resort to class legislation, are tried and have failed (i.e., assuming that there is a danger of the Indian vote swamping the European), a Bill like the present one should not be passed. Your Memorialists venture to submit that this is not a question that affects a mere handful of Her Majesty's subjects, but it affects 300,000,000 of Her Majesty's loyal subjects. The question is not how many or what Indians shall have the vote, but the question, your Memorialists humbly submit, is what *status* the British Indians shall occupy outside India and in the Colonies and allied States. May a respectable Indian venture out of India in pursuit of trade or other enterprise and hope to have any *status*? The Indian community do not want to shape the political destiny of South Africa, but they may be allowed to carry on their peaceful avocations quietly without any degrading conditions being imposed upon them. Your Memorialists, therefore, submit that if there is the slightest danger of the Indian vote preponderating, a simple educational test may be imposed on all alike, either with or without an increase in property qualifications. That would, in the opinion of the Government organ also, effectually remove all fear. And if such a test failed, a more severe test may be imposed,

which would tell against the Indians without materially affecting the European vote. If nothing short of a total exclusion of the Indians from the franchise would be acceptable to the Natal Government, and if Her Majesty's Government are inclined to favour such a demand, then your Memorialists submit that nothing short of specific exclusion of the Indians by name would satisfactorily meet the difficulty.

Your Memorialists, however, beg to draw your attention to the fact that the European Colonists as a body make no such demand. They seem to be absolutely indifferent. *The Natal Advertiser* thus rebukes the indifference:

> Perhaps the manner in which this all-important subject has been treated by Parliament also brings out a fourth point—the indifference of the Colony to its own politics. It would be highly interesting to discover, if such could be done, how many of the Colonists have taken the trouble even to read the Bill in question. Perhaps the proportion who have not read it would be a striking one. The general unconcern of the Colonists in this matter is demonstrated by the fact that meetings have not been held in every centre—not to say every nook and corner—of the Colony for its ventilation, and to formulate a demand that Parliament should only pass such a Bill as would render abortive all further controversy over the subject. Had the Colony been fully alive to the real gravity of the issue, the columns of the newspapers would also have teemed with a serious and intelligent correspondence on the question. Neither of these things, however, has happened. As a consequence the Government have been able to get through a measure supposed to effectually deal with the matter, but which in reality puts it in a far worse and dangerous position than ever it was before.

It would appear from the extracts quoted above that the present Bill satisfies neither party. With the utmost deference to the Natal Ministry and to both the Legislative bodies here, your Memorialists submit that the fact that the Bill has been accepted by them does not signify much. The very members who refrained from any active opposition to the measure are, as *The Natal Witness* puts it, distrustful of it.

Your Memorialists hope that they have shown to your satisfaction that the danger referred to above is imaginary and that the present Bill is unsatisfactory from the point of view of those who wish to see the Indians disenfranchised as also from that of the Indians themselves. In any case, however, your Memorialists claim that sufficient facts and arguments have been brought out to show that the question should not be hastily disposed of, and that there is no necessity for so doing. *The Natal Witness* thinks that "no explanation, at least no satisfactory one, has been given for the anxiety to rush the Bill through." *The Natal Advertiser* opines that " this Indian franchise question is a most vital one and there should be no haste in settling it for ever. Indeed the best course would be to postpone the proposed Bill and have the whole matter for the consideration of the constituencies when they have accurate information before them." (28-3-1896).

The feelings of the Indian community may be well expressed in the words of the London *Times*. *The Times* (Weekly edition, 20th March, 1896), says:

If the Indians are allowed to carry with them their *status* as British subjects to foreign countries and British Colonies whither they go in quest of work, the opening up of Africa holds out new possibilities to Indian labour. The Indian Government and the Indians themselves believe that it is in South Africa that this question of their *status* must be determined. If they secure the position of British subjects in South Africa, it will be almost impossible to deny it to them elsewhere. If they fail to secure that position in South Africa it will be extremely difficult for them to attain it elsewhere. They readily acknowledge that Indian labourers who accept a contract of service for a period of years, as the price of aided immigration, must fulfil the conditions of their contract, however it may curtail their rights. But they hold that after the period of contracted labour has expired, they are entitled to the *status* of British subjects in whatever colony or country they have fixed their abodes. . . . The Indian Government may reasonably ask that after Indian labourers have given their best years to South Africa they should not be forced back upon India by denying

to them the *status* of British subjects in their adopted homes. Whatever the decision may be, it will seriously affect the future development of emigration in India.

Dealing particularly with this question of franchise and the figures compiled from the *Natal Government Gazette* and now accepted as correct, the same paper says, under date 31st January, 1896 (Weekly edition):

According to this return, there are in the colony 9,309 European registered voters against 251 registered voters of British Indian origin. . . . Nor, if Mr. Gandhi's statements are correct, does it seem possible that the Indian vote can swamp the European at any period within the range of practical politics. . . . Not only are all Indian immigrants under labour contracts excluded but also all British Indians whatsoever, except an extremely small class, who, by intelligence and industry, have raised themselves to the position of well-to-do citizens. . . .

The returns show that even under the existing law it takes a long time for a British Indian to attain the franchise in Natal. With the exception of 63 British Indians, many of whom started with capital, and whose residence in the Colony is under ten years; the rest of the 251 voters seem to have resided during more than 10 years and the majority over 14. An analysis of the British Indian Voters' List according to occupation yields equally encouraging results to those who wish to see this question settled. . . .

It is precisely this class of men who form the most valued element in the municipal and other electorates in India. The argument that the Indian in Natal cannot claim higher privileges than he enjoys in India and that he has no franchise whatever in India is inconsistent with the facts. . . . So far as government by voting exists in India, Englishmen and Indians stand on the same footing, and alike in the Municipal, the Provincial, and the Supreme Councils the native interests are powerfully represented. Nor does the plea that the British Indian is unacquainted with the nature and responsibilities of representative government bear inspection. There is probably no other country in the world in which representative institutions have penetrated so deeply into the life of the people. . . .

The question now before Mr. Chamberlain *is not an academic one. It is not a question of argument but of race-feeling. The Queen's Proclamation of 1858 gave the full rights of British subjects to the Indians and, they vote in England and sit in the British Parliament on the same terms as Englishmen.* But these questions are inevitable in a vast Empire

made up of many peoples, and as the steamship brings the component populations of Greater Britain into closer contact they will present themselves in more acute forms. Two things are clear. Such questions will not settle themselves by being ignored, and a strong Government at home affords the best Court of Appeal to adjudicate upon them. *We cannot afford a war of races among our own subjects.* It would be as wrong for the Government of India to suddenly arrest the development of Natal by shutting off the supply of immigrants as it would be for Natal to deny the rights of citizenship to British Indian subjects, who, by years of thrift and good work in the Colony, have raised themselves to the actual *status* of citizens. (The italics throughout are your Memorialists'.)

Your Memorialists now leave their case in your hands, and in so doing earnestly pray, and confidently hope, that the Royal assent to the Bill hereinbefore referred to will be withheld, and, if there be any fear as to the European vote being swamped by the Indian, an enquiry be ordered to ascertain whether there actually exists any such danger under the existing law, or such other relief will be granted as may meet the ends of justice.

And for this act of justice and mercy your Memorialists, as in duty bound, shall for ever pray, &c. &c.

(Sd.) ABDUL KAREEM HAJI ADAM
AND OTHERS

From a photostat of a printed copy.

84. INTERVIEW ON EVE OF DEPARTURE FOR INDIA

[*June 4, 1896*]

On the eve of Gandhiji's departure for India a reporter of The Natal Advertiser *called upon him to ascertain his views on the state of Indian affairs then prevailing in the Colony generally. The following report of the interview appeared in the journal.*

In reply to various questions, Mr. Gandhi said the present membership of the Congress was 300. The annual subscription was £3, payable in advance. The Congress aimed at enrolling members who were not only able to pay their subscriptions, but who would also work for the objects of the Congress. They wanted to collect a large fund which would be invested in property so that a permanent income might be available to carry on the objects of the Congress.

"What are these objects?" asked the interviewer.

"They are of a two-fold character — political and educational," was the reply. "As to the educational part, we want to teach the Indians born in the Colony by inducing them with the offer of scholarships to study all subjects pertaining to their welfare as a community, including Indian and Colonial History, temperance &c."

"Is there any other qualification for membership in the Congress?"

"Yes, one is that members should be able to read, write and speak English, but this condition has not been strictly enforced of late."

"Financially how does the Congress stand?"

"There is a balance in hand of £194, and it possesses, besides, a property in Umgeni Road. I want the members

to raise this balance to £1,100, during my absence, and see no reason why it should not be done. This would do much to make it a permanent institution."

"What is the attitude of the Congress politically?"

"It does not want to exercise any strong political influence, the present object being to ensure that the promises made in the Proclamation of 1858 are fulfilled. When the Indians enjoy the same status in the Colony as they do in India, the Congress will have attained its end politically. It has no intention to become a political force to swamp any other party."

"What is the number of Indian voters in the Colony?"

"There are only 251 on the voters' roll, as against 9,309 Europeans. Of the former 143 are in Durban, and the Congress could not put forward more than 200 more in its best efforts. The end of its ambition, as I said, is an equal status with the Europeans, and we don't object to any qualification that may be required. We are even willing that the property qualification should be increased so long as it applies equally."

"What will your future programme be?"

"What it has always been. The Congress will continue to ventilate the grievances of the Indian community by the publication of literature throughout the Colony, in India and England, and to write to the newspapers on any Indian questions as they come prominently before the public, and to collect funds for its propaganda. Hitherto the Congress has not invited the Press to any of its meetings, but it has now been decided to do this occasionally, and furnish it with information concerning its efforts. The Congress first wished to be assured of a permanent existence before it invited the Press to its meetings. There is one matter I would like to correct. The address presented to me stated

that the various objects of the Congress had been fulfilled. That was not so. They were under consideration, and the Congress would continue to work for their attainment by every legitimate means, and it will resist any attempt to introduce coloured distinctions in the legislation for the Indian community; for these, if introduced, might be used in other colonies, and other parts of the world.

85. AN INDIAN GATHERING

On June 4, 1896, the Tamil and Gujarati Indians of Durban along with other communities met at the Indian Congress Hall for the purpose of recognizing, on their behalf, the services of Gandhiji as Hon. Secretary of the Natal Indian Congress. The attendance was large and much enthusiasm prevailed. The chair was taken by Shri Dada Abdulla and Shri Lawrence acted as interpreter for the Tamil portion of the audience. The following is a report from The Natal Advertiser:

After the presentation of an address, Mr. Gandhi, in acknowledging the kindnesses, said the occasion showed that whatever castes the Indians in Natal represented they were all in favour of being cemented in closer union. With regard to the objects of the Congress, he did not think any differences existed, else they would not have met as they had done to make its Secretary a presentation. If this surmise were correct, he would repeat the request he made the other evening[1] urging the attendance of the Madras Indians at the Congress. Up to the present that attendance had not been satisfactory, but he hoped that henceforth they would rally in greater numbers. He regretted his inability to speak Tamil, but was sure that what he said with reference

[1] This refers to an earlier meeting where he was presented an address. A report of this meeting or of his speech, however, is not available.

to Madras Indians keeping aloof would not be construed into any reflection upon them or any other portion of the Indian community. The objects of the Congress they all knew. Those objects were not to be attained by mere talk, and he, therefore, asked them to show their interest in its common ends by deeds, not words. He would particularly impress upon the audience to send delegates to Maritzburg, Ladysmith and other centres, where Indians of every class resided, and who were not yet represented at the Congress, and endeavour to get them to become members.

Mr. Gandhi sailed for India this morning.

The Natal Advertiser, 5-6-1896

SOURCES

Colonial Office Records: Housed in the Library of the Colonial Office, London, these Records include Despatches from the Colonial Secretary, the Governor of Natal and the British High Commissioner at Cape Town, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies; Votes and Proceedings of the Natal Legislatures, petitions to them, Sehedules of correspondence published by their orders; and documents and Blue books relating to South African affairs, issued in South Africa and London.

Dadabhai Naoroji: The Grand Old Man of India by R. P. Masani; London, Allen & Unwin, 1939.

Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, New Delhi: Central Museum and Library of Gandhian literature and collections of photostat, microfilm and originals of letters and other documents; maintained by the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi.

Kathiawar Times: Anglo-Gujarati weekly published from Rajkot.

Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi by D. G. Tendulkar; Bombay, Jhaveri and Tendulkar, 1951-4, in 8 volumes.

The Natal Advertiser: Daily newspaper issued from Durban.

The Natal Mercury (1852—)*:* Daily newspaper of Durban.

The Natal Witness (1846—)*:* Independent daily newspaper from Pietermaritzburg.

Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad: Maintained and managed by the Sabarmati Ashram Preservation and Memorial Trust, it possesses books by and on Gandhiji, files of clippings from over a dozen prominent South African newspapers for the period 1893-1901, Blue

books, and Gandhiji's records from 1893 to 1933, including some papers pertaining to the Natal Indian Congress.

Shrimad Rajchandra: Mansukhlal R. Mehta (Editor and publisher), 1914; the Collected Works of Rajchandra, in Gujarati.

The Story of My Experiments with Truth by M. K. Gandhi; Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, 1956. The autobiography of Gandhiji translated from original Gujarati by Mahadev Desai and first published in two volumes: Vol. I in 1927 and Vol. II in 1929. Originally serialized in *Young India.*

The Times of Natal (1851–1927): Daily newspaper of Pietermaritzburg.

The Vegetarian (1888—): Commenced publication as an independent journal and became the London Vegetarian Society's weekly official organ.

The Vegetarian Messenger: Organ of the Vegetarian Society of Manchester.

CHRONOLOGY

(*1869–96*)

This provides a brief biographical background and an indication of some of the more important activities of Gandhiji during the period.

1869

October 2: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi born at Porbandar.

1876

Attended primary school at Rajkot till 12 years of age. Betrothed to Kasturbai.

1881

Entered Alfred High School.

Married Kasturbai.

1884-85

Tried meat-eating, but abandoned it to avoid deceiving elders.
Father died, at sixty-three.

1887

November: Passed matriculation examination and joined Samaldas College at Bhavnagar.

1888

April-May: Diffident in his studies, was recommended to go in for law in England; secured mother's consent to this, promising to abstain from wine, woman and meat.

August 10: Left Rajkot for Bombay where caste meeting

tried to dissuade him from going abroad.

September 4: Despite stiff resistance from caste elders to his foreign studies, sailed for England.

October 28: Reached London.

November 6: Joined Inner Temple.

1889

To make up for his vegetarianism decided to become an "English gentleman" and started learning elocution, French, dancing and Western music, but soon realized his folly.

September: Called on Cardinal Manning, towards the end of month, to congratulate him on his role in the termination of the great London Dock Strike.

Visited Paris Exhibition (sometime between May and October).

November: Was introduced to Blavatsky and Annie Besant; but declined to become a regular member of the Theosophical Society.

December: Appeared for London matriculation but failed.

During the year Theosophist influence led him to read much Theosophical and other religious literature including Edwin Arnold's *The Song Celestial*, and *The Light of Asia*, the *Bhagavadgita* in the original and the Bible. Attended church service, and listened to famous preachers like Dr. Joseph Parker.

1890

Early this year, came to know the periodicals *The Vegetarian Messenger* of Manchester and *The Vegetarian* of London, and the Vegetarian Societies there. Attended International Vegetarian meeting with Josiah Oldfield. Started living simply; continued experiments in food;

conducted for a while Vegetarian Club with Josiah Oldfield as president, Edwin Arnold as vice-president and himself as secretary.

June: Passed matric.

September 19: Joined Vegetarian Society and became member of executive committee.

1891

January 30: Attended funeral of Charles Bradlaugh. Not impressed by his atheism, aversion to it being strengthened on reading Besant's *How I Became a Theosophist*.

February 20: Made maiden speech, at Vegetarian Society meeting, in defence of Dr. Allinson's claim to membership of Society despite his anti-puritanical views on birth control, which Gandhiji did not share.

February 21: In article in *The Vegetarian* described alcohol as "that enemy of mankind, that curse of civilization".

March 26: Was enrolled an associate member of London Theosophical Society.

May 1: Appointed Society's delegate to the meeting of the Federal Union of Vegetarian Societies.

June 10: Called to the Bar.

During legal studies, attended lectures by Dadabhai Naoroji. Advice from Frederic Pincutt emphasising honesty and industry filled him with hope for future as lawyer.

June 11: Enrolled in the High Court.

June 12: Sailed for India.

July 5-9: Reached Bombay and learnt with great grief of the passing away of his mother.

Met Rajchandra (Raychandbhai), jeweller, poet and ascetic, whom he was later to consider greater in religious perception than Tolstoy, and one of the three notable influences in his life. Performed expiation at Nasik

for infringement of caste injunction against foreign travel.

Reached Rajkot and stayed with brother Lakshmidas.

July 20: Taken back into caste, though still ostracized by a section.

November 16: Applied for admission as advocate of the Bombay High Court.

1892

March-April: Started attending to the education of children in the family on modern lines and adopted western mode of diet and dress.

May 14: Allowed to practise in Kathiawar Agency Courts by Gazette notification.

Finding practice in Rajkot difficult proceeded to Bombay to gain experience. Made experiments in diet with friend. Abandoned first brief out of nervousness and preferred drafting memorials. Driven to seek work as teacher, but refused as not being a graduate.

Winding up establishment in Bombay, after six months, rejoined brother at Rajkot. Working with him drawing up petitions and memorials, started making Rs. 300/- a month.

1893

April: Sailed for Durban, readily grasping opportunity of legal work in South Africa offered by Dada Abdulla & Co., leaving wife and child in Rajkot and intending to return in year's time.

May: Towards close of month reached Port Natal, where he was struck by scant respect shown to Indians.

May-June: On second or third day of arrival visited Durban Court; when asked to remove turban he preferred to leave premises. Wrote to the Press about in-

cident; was called "unwelcome visitor", but secured considerable publicity.

Seven or eight days later proceeded to Pretoria on client's work. During journey by train and coach had bitter experience of colour prejudice.

Resolved to fight to "root out the disease" of colour prejudice and "suffer hardships in the process". Baker, attorney and preacher, warned him of prevalence of colour prejudice and secured him lodgings in a poor woman's inn.

Attended Baker's prayer meetings and was introduced to Christians like Mr. Coates, a Quaker, and Misses Harris and Gabb, who became friendly.

During first week in Pretoria met Sheth Tyeb Haji Khan and addressed meeting of Indian Memon merchants on the condition of Indians in the Transvaal. Suggested and offered to help formation of association for seeking redress of grievances of Indian settlers. Stay in Pretoria gave him intimate knowledge of social, economic and political conditions of Indians in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

Had experience of regulation banning use of footpaths by Indians when he was kicked off the footpath near President Kruger's house, but refused despite pressure to sue White assailant on the ground that he would never go to court for personal grievances.

August 22-September 2: Conducted experiments in vital food. Constant contact with Mr. Coates and other Christian friends during this time prompted him to study books on Christianity and hold discussions with them, but he found difficulty in accepting their interpretation of the Bible and Christianity.

1894

April: While preparing case for his client, Dada Abdulla, realized paramount importance of facts, or truth, in

legal practice. Convinced of folly of litigation, had the dispute settled by arbitration. His professional engagement over, returned to Durban.

At farewell party saw announcement in *The Natal Mercury* of impending disfranchisement law and urged Indian merchants present to resist it. Was persuaded by them to extend his stay by a month to lead their struggle—a fateful decision.

At this time took to serious religious study. Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God Is Within You* overwhelmed him. Corresponded with Christian friends in England. Also wrote to religious thinkers in India, like Raychandbhai whose replies to his questions on Hinduism reassured him.

May 22(?): At meeting of prominent Indian merchants set up committee to agitate against discriminatory legislation.

June 27: Sent telegrams to Speaker of Natal Legislative Assembly, Prime Minister Robinson and Attorney-General Escombe, asking for postponement of consideration of Franchise Law Amendment Bill till Indian petition was presented. Discussion of Bill deferred by two days.

June 28: Submitted to Legislative Assembly petition, signed by 500 Indians, opposing Bill and asking for Commission of Enquiry.

June 29: Waited in deputation on Premier; requested for week's time to present the Indian case more exhaustively.

July 1: Attended and addressed meeting of Indians in Field Street.

July 3: Led deputation to Natal Governor and urged him not to sanction the Franchise Bill which received third reading in Assembly.

July 5: Initiated correspondence with Dadabhai Naoroji seeking his intervention in England on behalf of South African Indians.

July 6: Indians presented second petition to Legislative Council pressing for the rejection of the Franchise Bill.

July 7: Franchise Bill received third reading in Council.

July 10: Petitioned Governor requesting postponement of dispatch of the Bill to the Imperial Government for Royal assent, pending Indian petition to the latter.

July 17: Submitted to Natal Governor lengthy mass petition signed by 10,000 Indians, addressed to Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for Colonies.
Settled down in Natal to continue public work.

August 22: Established Natal Indian Congress to carry on sustained agitation against discriminatory legislation, becoming its first Secretary; also Colonial-born Indians Association.

September 3: Allowed by Supreme Court to practise in Natal Courts, despite opposition by Natal Law Society. In Court, asked to remove turban, obeyed to conform to court practice and to reserve his strength for "fighting bigger battles".

September 19: Appeared in Gopi Maharaj case, probably his first in South Africa, and won. . . But subordinated legal career to public work.

November 26: Indicated growing interest in Esoteric Christianity by becoming agent for selling its literature.

December (prior to 19): Addressed documented "Open Letter" to Natal Legislators.

December 19: Circulated appeals among Europeans in Natal for sympathetic approach to problem of Indian settlers.

1895

April: Visited Trappist Monastery near Durban, where practice of vegetarianism from spiritual point of view greatly impressed him.

April 6: Through Committee of British Indian Merchants petitioned High Commissioner against unsatisfactory award in Indian Arbitration case.

May (prior to 5): Appealed to Natal Assembly against re-indenture clauses in Indian Immigration Bill.

May (after 14): Appealed again to Lord Ripon concerning injustice of award leaving Indian trading rights at the mercy of the law courts.
Sought intervention of Lord Elgin, Viceroy of India, to protect Indian interests against discriminatory laws and disabilities.

June 17: Defended and freed indentured labourer Balasundaram. The case brought him into contact with indentured labour.

June 26: Petitioned Legislative Council against clauses affecting indentured labour in Immigration Bill.

August 11: Addressed lengthy petition to Chamberlain objecting to the imposition of the £3 licence fee on indenture-expired Indians. Requested Lord Elgin to intervene, or stop further emigration of Indian labour.

August 29: In London Dadabhai Naoroji led deputation to Chamberlain in connection with the grievances of British Indians in South Africa.

September 12: Chamberlain conveyed to Natal Government refusal of Imperial Government to sanction Franchise Bill in its existing form.

September 25,30: Gandhiji wrote to the Press denying Natal Indian Congress being a secret organization or his being its paid employee, but accepting responsibility for drafting its Constitution.

October 22: British Indian Defence Committee and Johannesburg Indians telegraphed Chamberlain protesting against interpretation of the term "British subjects" in

Commando Treaty, exempting citizens from compulsory military service, as applying only to the Whites.

November 18: Natal Government forwarded fresh draft of Franchise Bill to Secretary of State for Colonies. Europeans organized meetings at Ladysmith, Salisbury, Bellair etc., in support of Asiatic legislation.

November 26: Gandhiji memorialized Chamberlain against discrimination in Commando Treaty.

December 16: Issued *The Indian Franchise: An Appeal to Every Briton in South Africa.*

During the year, Tolstoy's *The Gospels in Brief: What to Do?* and other books deeply impressed him and taught him "the infinite possibilities of universal love".

1896

January 23: Gandhiji applied for appointment as a Gujarati interpreter in Natal Court.

January 27: *The Times*, London, referred to Gandhiji as one "whose efforts on behalf of his Indian fellow-subjects in South Africa entitle him to respect".

February 26: Petitioned Governor of Zululand protesting against the Townships Regulations.

March 3: Natal Government *Gazette* released text of new draft Franchise Bill, introduced in legislature.

March 5: Petition regarding the Townships Regulations rejected by Government.

March 11: Gandhiji made representations to Chamberlain against the Townships Regulations.

April 27: Franchise Bill, in its modified form, disfranchising natives of other countries who did not enjoy parliamentary franchise there, presented to Natal Parliament. Natal Indians petitioned to Legislative Assembly at Pietermaritzburg against the Bill.

May 6: Franchise Bill read second time.

May 7: Gandhiji cabled Chamberlain and British Committee of the Indian National Congress against acceptance of the Franchise Bill or any alterations thereto till Indian memorial in that behalf was presented.

May 13: Franchise Bill given third reading and passed in the Legislative Assembly.

May 18: Gandhiji waited in deputation on and wrote to Her Majesty's Agent in Pretoria requesting the Government to bear cost of test case contemplated by Indian community against the interpretation of Law 3 of 1885.

May 26: Representatives of Durban Indian community authorised Gandhiji, who was due to leave for India, to "represent the grievances the Indians are labouring under in South Africa before the authorities and public men and public bodies in India".

June 4: Gandhiji given address by Durban Indians at farewell meeting in Congress Hall.

June 5: Gandhiji left for India.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL SET-UP IN SOUTH AFRICA (1890-1914)

THE CAPE COLONY

In terms of the Constitution Ordinance of 1853, Government machinery in the Cape Colony consisted of the Governor with executive powers but not responsible to the legislature, which was composed of a Legislative Assembly and a Legislative Council, both elective bodies. The latter was reconstituted in 1872 on the basis of a division of the Colony into seven circles, each represented by members. The legislature was more or less on the Colonial lines, as in Canada and Australia, but adapted to local needs.

The franchise for the Upper House was a low one, with a high property qualification. The Franchise and Ballot Act of 1892 provided that the voter should have an annual income of £50 or fixed property worth £75. It also provided for a writing test. Though the rule applied to all alike, in practice it restricted the number of non-White voters, whose number was outproportioned by that of the White voters.

The Constitution was of the liberal, Colonial type, with power over domestic policies subject, in their implementation, to the mother country. It was in operation virtually till 1910 when the Cape became a province of the Union.

The Glen-Grey Act of 1894 introduced partial self-government for the natives through village and district councils, within the framework of the General Council, each composed of six members, four elected and two nominated, with a European Magistrate as chairman. In the General Council, three Africans, one nominated and two elected, represented each district council. The General Council, which had considerable powers of self-government, derived its revenue largely from quit rent and hut tax; the district council had no

original taxing powers. The Glen-Grey Act was extended during 1899-1903 to Kentani and other districts in the Colony.

The South Africa Act of 1909, on the basis of which the Union was created, provided a safeguard for the "colour-blind" franchise of the Cape, by specifically laying down that any alteration tending to diminish the voting powers of persons in the Cape Province only by reason of their race or colour, could be effected only by a two-third majority vote of both Houses of the Union Parliament sitting jointly.

Cape Town, which was till 1901 the seat of the British High Commissioner, around whom South African politics centred till effective power passed into the hands of a South African Ministry in 1910, became the seat of the Union legislature.

Natal

Natal achieved responsible government in 1893. The Bill, adopted by the Legislative Council and approved by the Imperial Government, provided for a bicameral legislature: a Legislative Council of 11 nominated members appointed for 10 years and an elected Legislative Assembly of 37 members with a life of four years. The Executive consisted of the Governor with a Council of Ministers. As to franchise, in 1896, Sir John Robinson, Natal's first prime minister, was responsible for the Disenfranchisement Act which affected Asiatics, and the Immigration Act which all but prohibited the entry of free Indians into the Colony. A Constitutional crisis arose in 1906 when the Imperial Government stayed an order for the execution of several natives issued by the Natal Government, which resigned in protest but resumed office later when the Secretary of State for the Colonies assured that H.M.'s. Government had no intention of interfering with a responsible Colonial Government.

The Orange River Colony

Till 1890 the Orange River Colony governed itself on the basis of the Rustenburg Grondwet or the Constitution of

1858-60, which provided for an elected President, an Executive Council consisting of members appointed in part by the President and in part by the Volksraad, itself elected by the vote of adult citizens. The Commandant-General of the Forces was an important member of the Council. The Constitution, which established the sovereignty of the people, declared that they desired no equality between coloured and White peoples, either in Church or State. The Treaty of Bloemfontein forged, in 1897 and the two following years, closer bonds between the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal. The Joint Council consisting of representatives of both countries met at Bloemfontein and Pretoria, and while keeping the ideal of federal union in view, provided for greater uniformity in such matters as education, the administration of justice, native management etc.

At the conclusion of the Boer War, when the Colony came under British power, the military government took over, but this was terminated by the Treaty of Vereeniging which established in 1902 an Executive Council of the Lt.-Governor and principal officials. A Legislative Council with a minority of nominated non-official members representing local interests was set up in 1903. An Inter-Colonial Council was later constituted with 14 official and 4 nominated non-official members to administer matters of common interest to the two republics. It was in 1907 that the Colony attained self-governing status. Its Constitution adopted the White manhood suffrage with the rigid colour distinction characteristic of the old republic and laid down that the Second Chamber of legislature, the Legislative Council, should be nominative, appointments being made, in the first instance, by the Governor and, later, by the Governor-in-Council.

The Transvaal

The Crown Colony Constitution—a nominated Executive Council and a Legislative Assembly — which the

Transvaal secured in 1879, was modified by the Pretoria Convention which guaranteed full self-government, subject to British suzerainty. This was negatived in the London Convention which removed the preamble of the earlier Convention. In 1897, the Transvaal joined the Orange River Colony in setting up a permanent Council to advise on matters of common interest.

On the annexation of the Transvaal by the British in 1900, Milner was appointed Administrator. The old statute book was overhauled and a mass of legislation on Cape lines was enacted by proclamation on the recommendation of the Solomon Commission. Johannesburg was given municipal government in 1901 and Pretoria the following year. The Treaty of Vereeniging provided for a Crown Colony status, progressing by easy stages to responsible government. In 1902, the Transvaal secured an Executive Council and a Legislative Council, both nominated and composed of the executive heads of Departments, with a Lt.-Governor. In 1903, the Legislative Council was set up and a little later in the year, the Inter-Colonial Council. The Lyttelton Constitution was promulgated in 1905, providing for an elective Legislative Assembly with power in the hands of officials responsible to the Governor. The Assembly was to consist of 44 members, all elected, except Executive Officers appointed by the Crown.

Self-government came in 1906, on the abrogation of the Lyttelton Constitution by Letters Patent. The Transvaal adopted the White manhood franchise, typical of the old Republic, but gave legal rights to the coloured people; native franchise was deferred till representative institutions had been set up and assured a preponderant White majority rule. The Second Chamber or Legislative Council was made a nominated body on the lines of the Orange River Colony. After general elections in 1908, the Government enacted considerable restrictive legislation.

The Union

The four States in South Africa were amalgamated into a Union of South Africa in 1910. The Union Government consisted of the Governor-General-in-Council, aided by a number of Executive Councillors, and Ministers of State Departments, not exceeding ten.

The Union Parliament which had sovereignty over the Union, was composed of the King and Union Houses of Legislature: the Senate and the House of Assembly. The two Houses had equal legislative powers, except in matters of finance. All bills had to be passed by both Houses and any deadlock resolved by joint session. The Parliament could alter its own Constitution (the South Africa Act) excepting three entrenched clauses which could be altered only by a two-thirds majority of both Houses sitting jointly. The clauses were those dealing with (1) recognition of English and Dutch as official languages, (2) any alterations to the franchise that may diminish the voting powers of persons in the Cape Province by reason of their race or colour only, and (3) empowering of Parliament to amend the Act, through normal bicameral procedure, except in the case of the two other clauses and of this clause itself.

The House of Assembly, elected by direct popular vote for five years, had 159 seats, all for Europeans; of these 150 were elected by voters throughout the four provinces, six by European voters in S.W. Africa and three by African voters in the Cape. The voters were (1) Europeans above 21. Immigrants were to have six years' residence, British subjects five years, after which they could apply for citizenship; this was within the discretion of the Minister of the Interior. (2) Coloured males in the Cape and Natal who were literate and who either earned £75 a year or owned fixed property of £50 were entitled to vote; and in the Cape only, African males who were literate and who either earned £75 or owned fixed property of £50 were entitled to enrol, on a

separate Roll, to elect three members. In the constituencies the number of voters was equal, with a margin of 15% above or below the quota for adjustment.

The Senate, with a term of ten years, had 48 members, all European property-owners; eight from each province, elected by M.P.'s and the Provincial Council of the Province; two by M.P.'s and the Legislative Assembly of S.W. Africa; ten appointed by Government and four elected for five years by Africans of the Union by indirect election through Chiefs, Native Councils and Native Advisory Boards.

Provincial Governments

These consisted of (1) The Administrator, appointed for five years, by the Union Government and liable to be removed only by the Governor-General-in-Council with the knowledge of the Parliament; (2) an Executive Committee of four elected for three years and by proportional voting by the members of the Provincial Councils; and (3) Provincial Councils elected on the same franchise as the Union House of Assembly, to be dissolved at the end of three years.

The Administrator had a dual role. As Chairman of the Executive Committee he participated in the proceedings. He recommended but did not vote financial appropriations. As representative of the Union Government he administered matters outside the jurisdiction of the Provincial Councils.

The Executive Committees had residuary powers vested in them. The Provincial Councils had all the attributes of legislative bodies, including power to make ordinances on specified subjects not repugnant to Acts of Parliament, subject to the approval of the Governor-General-in-Council. Matters within their powers were education (excepting higher one), hospitals, municipal institutions, and local works other than railways. The unique combination of parliamentary and municipal institutions was a concession to

federal sentiment without weakening the Central Government authority. The Union Parliament had overriding powers.

The Supreme Court of South Africa, with the Appellate Division at Bloemfontein, had Provincial Divisions as branches. The Supreme Court had powers to decide the validity of the Provincial Ordinances.

The Provincial revenues were derivable from provincial taxes up to 40% of the budgets; the balance was made up from subsidies from the Central revenues; financial relations among the Provinces were regulated by the Financial Relations Act of 1913.

A BRIEF CHRONICLE OF SOUTH AFRICA

This Chronicle is not intended to give a complete record of events, but includes only those items which might aid the reader in understanding the historical background and something of the forces which were at work during Gandhiji's life and activities in South Africa.

1795 British forces occupied the Cape by arrangement with the Dutch, primarily because of the Cape's strategic position on the route to India. White settlers at the time numbered 16,000.

1802 The Cape Colony returned to the Dutch Republican Government by virtue of the Treaty of Amiens.

1806 The Cape reconquered by Britain.

1815 The Congress of Vienna ratified cession of the Cape Colony to Britain.

1820 First batch of British settlers landed on the Cape Colony shores.

1823 Commission of Enquiry into Cape affairs.

1834 Legislative Council set up in Cape Colony and popularly elected municipal councils introduced. Slavery abolished.

1836 Great Trek began.

1838 Republican State established in Natal.

1841 Citizens of the Cape Colony petitioned for a Legislative Assembly.

1843 Natal annexed, by the British, to the Cape Colony.

1845 Judicial machinery introduced in Natal, hitherto under the authority of the Governor and Legislative Council of the Cape Colony.

1846 Governor of the Cape Colony appointed High Commissioner.

1847 Elective municipal boards in urban areas in Natal provided.

1848 Natal given a nominated Legislative Council. The Free State proclaimed Orange River Sovereignty.

1852 Sand River Convention recognized Boer independence in the Transvaal.

1853 Cape Colony Constitution Ordinance promulgated.

1854 Orange Free State and the Transvaal became independent following Bloemfontein Convention. Municipalities of Durban and Pietermaritzburg set up.

1855 Natal unsuccessfully petitioned the Queen for import of convict labour.

1856 Natal given representative government and parliamentary franchise, with the status of a Crown Colony and a Legislative Council with elected majority. High property qualification debarred natives from the vote.

1857 Natal Supreme Court reconstituted and trial by jury in indictable offences instituted. Legislative Council met for first time at Pietermaritzburg.

1858 Natal attempt to introduce Amatonga tribesmen as labour failed. Chinese and Malay labourers introduced from Java. Approach to Government of India met with success.

1859 Natal Legislative Council passed law for importing Indian labour.

1860 First batch of Indian indentured labourers from Madras, to work on sugar plantations of Natal, set foot on South African soil.

1866 Number of Indian indentured labourers in Natal reached 5,000.

1868 Basutoland annexed to the British Crown.

1869 Diamond fields discovered in Free State.

1870 Diamonds discovered at Kimberley.
Law 2 of 1870 passed to permit land being offered to indenture-expired labourers in Natal.
Basutoland partitioned between the Crown and Free State.

1872 Full responsible government established in Cape Colony.

1876 Native Affairs Commission gave Executive greater powers over the natives. Pretoria founded.
Resumption of import of Indian labour, for railway construction and harbour improvement.

1877 The Transvaal annexed.

1878 Kruger sailed for England to seek withdrawal of British annexation of the Transvaal.

1879 The Transvaal given Crown Colony status with nominated Executive Council and Legislative Assembly. Afrikander Bond organisation set up for "a united South Africa under its own flag".

1880–1 The Transvaal War of Independence or Boer War.

1881 Pretoria Convention guaranteed the Transvaal "complete self-government subject to the suzerainty of H.M.'s Government".
Indian traders from Natal entered the Transvaal.

1882 Locations Commission constituted in the Transvaal. Removal of natives to locations sanctioned but not enforced.

1883 Kruger, elected President in the Transvaal, visited London for securing revision of the Pretoria Convention.

1884 London Convention between Britain and South African Republic secured all, except the natives,

liberty of entry, travel and residence in the Republic and freedom of commerce and from taxes not imposed on Burghers.

Hofmeyr returned to Parliament as leader of a 32-member Afrikander Party.

Natal Legislative Council decided to set up Commission to devise best means for bringing Colony's Asiatic population under effective control.

Public demand in the Transvaal for restrictive legislation referred to the Imperial Government.

1885 Law 3 of 1885 enacted in the Transvaal restricting Asiatic rights, with the approval of the Imperial Government, in deference to European demand for the segregation of Asiatics in locations.

Natal Government appointed Indian Immigration Commission under Justice Wragg, whose findings revealed a preponderance of European opinion in the Colony against "the presence of the free Indians as a rival or competitor, either in agricultural or commercial pursuits".

British Protectorate of Bechuanaland proclaimed and Crown Colony constituted out of southern area.

1886 Part of Bechuanaland annexed to the Cape Colony.

Gold-fields discovered in the Transvaal.

Commission appointed to enquire into allegations by Europeans of Natal against the Indians. The Imperial Government declared their intention not to oppose the anti-Asiatic legislation implied in Law 3 of 1885, but recognized the Indians' right to settle in the Transvaal for purpose of trade.

1887 Law 3 of 1885 amended.

British sovereignty proclaimed over part of Zululand, placed under the Natal Government. Parliamentary Voters Registration Act passed in the Cape Colony.

First Colonial Conference ruled out discussion of plans for closer political union.
Johannesburg came into being.

1888 Indian petition to the Transvaal Government against classification with the Kaffirs and ban on movement in the streets after 9 p.m. rejected.
Case of Ismail Suliman decided that Asiatics could not carry on business except in a location. Dispute referred to arbitration by the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State, whose award recognized the right of Government to enforce Law 3 of 1885, subject to interpretation by the Courts.

1889 Rhodes secured mining concessions from the Matabele. Matabele war and rebellion end in conquest of Rhodesia.
British South Africa Company established by Royal Charter.

1890 Rhodes formed his first ministry at the Cape.
British South Africa Company annexed Mashonaland.

1892 The Franchise and Ballot Act enacted in the Cape Colony.
National Union of the Uitlanders formed in the Transvaal.

1893 The Volksraad adopted resolution to devise ways and means of enforcing Law 3 of 1885 against Indians.
Natal attained responsible government.
Natal's first ministry formed by Sir John Robinson.
In the Cape Colony the Commission on Native labour recommended special tax on every male native, to be remitted on proof of absence from home on employment during the year.
In the Transvaal the Chamber of Mines set up special labour organization under Native Labour Commission.

1894 The first administration under responsible government in Natal secured parliamentary sanction for abolition of annual grant in aid of Indian immigration.

Franchise Law Amendment Bill mooted in Natal.
'Glen-Grey' Act gave legal sanction to the Cape Colony to impose tax on native males.
Natal signed Convention with the Transvaal.
Discovery of gold and diamonds in the Witwatersrand.

Pondoland annexed to the Cape.
Swaziland put under control of South African Republic with safeguards for native interests.
Cape Parliament authorized East London Municipality to exclude Indians from side-walks in town.

1895 The Transvaal assumed protectorate over Swaziland.
British Bechuanaland annexed to the Cape Colony.
General Council set up in the Cape under Governor-General.

Act 17 of 1895 passed in Natal.
Commission appointed in the Transvaal to investigate the question of the administration of Law 3 of 1885.

Uitlanders formed Reform Association.

Jameson raid on Johannesburg. British High Commissioner issued repudiation.

1896 Disenfranchisement Act 8 of 1896 introduced in Natal.

Rhodes resigns premiership in the Cape.
Transvaal Native Labour Commission secured monopoly rights for establishing labour recruitment depots in Portuguese East Africa.
Commission's report on Law 3 of 1885 in the Transvaal adopted by the Volksraad.

1897 Law 3 prohibited marriage between White and coloured persons. Elections in Natal. Binns succeeded Escombe.
Immigration Restriction Act I of 1897 promulgated in Natal.
Dealers' Licensing Act 18 of 1897 passed.
Bloemfontein Convention between the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.
Milner posted as High Commissioner at the Cape.
Queen's Diamond Jubilee.
First Conference of Prime Ministers of Britain and Colonies, in London.

1898 Conference between the Transvaal and British representatives at Bloemfontein.
Natal entered the Customs Union.
Schreiner, as the head of the 'Bond' party, became Premier in the Cape; Kruger re-elected President.
Federal Rand of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State met for first time.

1899 The Boer War broke out. British spokesmen considered Indian ill-treatment one of the causes of the war.
British troops from India landed in Durban.

1900 British territory of the Orange Free State proclaimed Orange River Colony. The Transvaal annexed. 20,000 Boer refugee women and children died in British concentration camps. Land Settlement Commission Report issued.

1901 Municipal Government set up in Johannesburg.

1902 Treaty of Vereeniging terminated Boer War.
Rhodes died.
Municipal Government set up in Pretoria.
Portuguese East Africa Government offered fee of 13s. for every native recruited from its territory for South African labour.

New Governments proclaimed in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony.

Chamberlain visited South Africa. Boer plea for relaxation of Treaty terms rejected at Pretoria and Bloemfontein.

1903 Peace Preservation Ordinance regulated entry of Indians into the Transvaal.

Transvaal British Indian Association formed, and presented petition against the working of the Asiatic Office.

Customs Union established at Bloemfontein.

Inter-Colonial Council, with non-official representatives from the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, set up to advise the High Commissioner on matters of common interest.

Bloemfontein Convention set up Native Affairs Commission.

The Transvaal Legislative Council adopted motion for the immigration of coloured labour under indenture.

In the Transvaal, annual £3 tax made applicable to males above sixteen and females above thirteen.

1904 Kruger died. Outbreak of plague in Johannesburg. Lord Curzon's despatch spoke of no enthusiasm in India for sending Indian labour to the Transvaal, with "the bitter example of Natal" before them. Colonial Office approved of Ordinance for import of Chinese labour.

1905 Smuts, visiting Britain to demand self-government for South Africa, secured promise of it from Campbell-Bannerman, British Premier.

Het Volk (The People's party) formed in the Transvaal.

Lyttelton Constitution promulgated.

1906 Lyttelton Constitution annulled by Letters Patent in the Transvaal and responsible government granted. Cape Government requested Lord Selborne to consider political unification of South African States. Asiatic Registration Ordinance promulgated. Legislation passed excluding Asiatics from the Transvaal in the future.

The Cape Colony passed Immigration Act of 1906.

1907 Zulu Rebellion.

Responsible Government granted to the Orange River Colony.

Commission on Indian labour recommended its import.

General elections in the Transvaal returned the *Het Volk* to power, with Botha as Premier. Asiatic (Chinese) Labour Ordinance terminated.

Selborne's memorandum regarding political unification in South Africa issued.

Prime Ministers' Conference in London.

1908 General elections in the Cape returned to power the South African Party led by Merriman.

National Convention at Durban agreed on most of the terms of Constitution for a Union rather than a Federation.

Act 36 passed to validate voluntary registration. Registration Act not being repealed, civil disobedience decided on by Indian leaders.

Inter-Colonial Council dissolved.

Hertzog established in the Transvaal compulsory use of English and Dutch.

Revolt in Zululand suppressed.

1909 National Convention produced report in form of draft Act of Union which was accepted by Imperial Parliament as the South Africa Act.

1910 Union of South Africa came into being. First Union

Cabinet set up under General Botha, leader of the South African Party. Hertzog and Smuts included. Immigration Act of 1908 civilly disobeyed by Indians.

1911 South African Government prohibited free immigration.
First Imperial Conference attended by representatives of a United South African Dominion, led by Botha.
Indenture system abolished in India.

1912 Hertzog broke away from Botha and formed the Nationalist Party with the cry "South Africa first before the Empire".
Financial Relations Inquiry Commission.

1913 Land Act passed.
Indian Passive Resistance movement in Natal. The Great March across Natal border into the Transvaal. General strike.
Immigrants Regulation Act of 1913 (Act 22 of 1913).
£3 tax abolished by Indian Relief Act. Indians boycotted South African Government's Solomon Commission.
Smuts-Gandhi correspondence; struggle terminated on demands being accepted.
Financial Relations Act (Act 10 of 1913), Immigration Act (Act 13 of 1913) passed.

1914 General Strike; Smuts acted illegally by deporting syndicalist leaders. Strike collapsed.
Smuts-Gandhi Agreement; Gandhiji left South Africa for India.

NOTES

ABDULLA, DADA: Proprietor of Dada Abdulla & Co., Durban, leading Indian firm, to conduct whose law-suit Gandhiji first went to South Africa.

ADAM, ABDUL KARIM HAJI: Managing partner of Dada Abdulla & Co., Chairman of the first Committee of Indians set up in Durban to resist the Indian Franchise Bill in 1893.

ALLINSON, DR T. R.: Writer on health and hygiene whose works Gandhiji found helpful. A member of the London Vegetarian Society till he was censured for his unorthodox views on birth control. Attended on Gandhiji during his illness from pleurisy in 1914.

ANSTEY, THOMAS CHISHOLM (1816–1873): Lawyer and politician; Member of Parliament 1847–52.

BALE, SIR HENRY: A leading lawyer and prominent member of the Natal Legislative Assembly, he became Administrator of Natal in 1904 and 1909.

BANERJEA, SIR SURENDRANATH (1848–1925): Front-rank Moderate politician who visited Britain as a member of the Indian National Congress deputation in 1890. Member of the Legislative Council of Bengal (1893–1901). Owned and edited the *Bengalee*, leading newspaper of Calcutta. Under the Montford Reforms became member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. President of the Congress in 1895 and 1902.

BARBERTON: A town in the Transvaal, 283 miles from Pretoria.

BHAVNAGAR: A former Prince's State of Kathiawar, now merged in the Bombay State.

BINNS, SIR HENRY (1837–1899): Member of the two-man Commission sent to India in 1894, by the Natal Government, to negotiate with the Indian Government revision of the Indentured labour agreement. Leader of the unformed opposition in the Natal Legislative Assembly. Premier of Natal in succession to Escombe.

BIRDWOOD, SIR GEORGE CHRISTOPHER MOLESWORTH (1832–1917): Indian-born, served in the Bombay Medical Service in 1854, and later, for thirty years in the India Office, London. Author of *Report on the Miscellaneous Old Records of the India Office* and *The Industrial Arts of India.*

BLOEMFONTEIN: Capital of the Orange Free State and judicial capital of the Union, after 1910. 254 miles from Johannesburg.

BOOTH, DR.: Head of St. Aidan's Mission, Durban, he supervised small charitable hospital founded by Indians. In 1899, during the Boer War, Dr. Booth helped to train the Indian Ambulance Corps.

BURNS, JOHN (1858–1943): Prominent labour representative in the British Parliament (1897–1918). Came into prominence, as a friend of working men, during the days of the London Dock Strike of 1889.

CAINE, WILLIAM SPROSTON (1842–1903): Four times member of British Parliament, served on the Indian Parliamentary sub-committee of the British Committee of the Congress; supported self-government for India. Was keenly interested in South African Indians' cause.

CAMPBELL, HENRY: Advocate and chief agent for British Indian merchants in the Transvaal; drafted and presented petitions for them.

CAMROODEEN, MAHOMED KASIM: Indian merchant of Johannesburg and active member of the Natal Indian Congress.

CAPE TOWN: The 'Mother City' of South Africa. Capital of Cape Province and legislative centre of the Union.

CHAMBERLAIN, JOSEPH (1836–1914): Secretary of State for the Colonies. In 1902 visited South Africa. His 8 years' regime saw the breakdown of negotiations with Kruger, resulting in the Boer War, and the Treaty of Vereeniging. With Lord Milner helped the post-war reconstruction of the Transvaal and Natal. Resigned in 1903.

CHARLESTOWN: Town, 318 miles from Durban, inside the Natal border.

CHARTER ACT OF 1833: Based on the findings of a Parliament Commission of Enquiry, the Act abolished the East India Company's trading rights in India and confined its function to ruling its possessions. Reaffirmed in 1853, the Charter Act provided that no native of India shall be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the East India Company, by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent or colour.

Chronicon Paschale: An outline of Chronology from Adam to 629 A.D., supposed to have been compiled in the seventh century.

DADA, HAJI MUHAMMAD HAJI: Prominent businessman and leader of the Indian community. In 1893, presided over its first meeting to consider resistance to the Franchise Bill. Vice-President of the Natal Indian Congress, 1894–9.

DELAGOA BAY: Port and commercial centre, 296 miles to the north of Durban, capital of Portuguese East Africa; also known as Lourenco Marques.

DHANDHUKA: A small town in Kathiawar (Saurashtra).

DHOLA: Railway junction in Kathiawar (Saurashtra).

DUNDEE: Small town about 250 miles from Durban.

DURBAN: Port, commercial capital and 'the Gateway' of Natal; 494 miles from Johannesburg.

EAST LONDON: Important coastal town and port of the Cape Colony.

ELGIN, LORD (1849–1917): Viceroy of India 1894-9; later Chairman of the Royal Commission to investigate the conduct of the South African War. Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1905-8.

ESCOMBE, SIR HARRY (1838–99): Leading advocate of the Supreme Court of Natal, he pleaded for Gandhiji's admission to the Bar of the Natal Supreme Court. Premier of Natal in 1897.

ESHOWE: Administrative centre of the Zululand Reserve.

ESOTERIC CHRISTIAN UNION: This body, of which Gandhiji became an agent in 1894, was founded in 1891 by Edward Maitland. The word 'Esoteric' implies an element of mysticism, meant for those initiated into a secret doctrine of theosophy.

EST COURT: A town about 150 miles from Durban.

FAWCETT, HENRY (1833–1884): Professor of Political Economy at Cambridge and statesman. In Parliament devoted himself largely to Indian finance and economic questions.

GANI, ABDUL: One of the oldest residents of the Transvaal, partner and manager of the firm of Mahomed Kasim Camroodeen in Johannesburg. One of Gandhiji's first contacts in South Africa. Chairman of the Transvaal British Indian Association (founded in 1903).

GERMISTON: Principal railway station of the Transvaal.

HEBER, BISHOP REGINALD (1783–1826): Bishop of Calcutta, established Bishop's College in that city; widely travelled in India.

HUNTER, SIR WILLIAM WILSON (1840-1900): Served in India for 25 years; wrote a number of books including *Indian Empire*. Compiled *The Imperial Gazetteer of India* in 14 volumes. Member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council (1881-1887). On retirement from India, became member of the British Committee of the Congress, and

from 1890 contributed to *The Times* on Indian affairs.

IRISH HOME RULE BILL: This Bill was introduced by Gladstone in 1886 in the British Parliament. It was a very modest measure which transferred Irish administration to an executive appointed by an Irish Parliament but left the power of taxation largely to the British Government. It met with furious opposition both in England and in Ulster, and was rejected in the House of Commons. In 1893, Gladstone, again in office, introduced a Home Rule Bill which was passed in the Commons, but was rejected in the Lords by an overwhelming majority.

ISMAIL SULIMAN'S CASE: This was a case in which Ismail Suliman, an Arab trader, in August 1888, was denied a trading licence to carry on business except in a location. Arbitration by the Chief Justice of Orange Free State recognized the right of the South African Republic to enforce the relative law (3 of 1885) subject to interpretation by the country's tribunals. The Supreme Court of the Transvaal however reversed the judgement later, and held that the Government had no power under that law to withhold licences from Asiatics.

JETPUR: A railway station in Saurashtra.

JOHANNESBURG: City of the Witwatersrand area, the richest gold-field in the Transvaal.

JUNAGADH: A former Prince's State of Saurashtra, now merged in the Bombay State.

KATHIAWAR: Now known as Saurashtra, a collection of small Princes' States or principalities.

KENNINGTON: A suburb of London.

KINGSFORD, DR ANNA: Doctor of Medicine; vegetarian, whose thesis was published as *The Perfect Way in Diet*; later collaborated with Edward Maitland, in *Addresses on Vegetarianism*, among other books.

LAUGHTON F. A.: Lawyer of Durban who acted as consultant and counsel for Indians, often appearing in Court with Gandhiji.

LAW 3 OF 1885: A Transvaal law, this applied to "the so-called Coolies, Arab, Malays and Mahomedan subjects of the Turkish Empire". It rendered them incapable of obtaining extended citizenship rights and of owning fixed property in the Republic. An exception was later made in the case of the "Coolies" who could, as sanctioned by Volksraad resolution of January 1887, own fixed property in specified streets, wards and locations on grounds of sanitation. A further Volksraad resolution, in 1893, laid down that all Asiatics should be enforced to live and trade in the locations. Trade could be carried on by registration and payment of a fee of £3. The law was considered to be in contravention of the London Convention.

LONDON CONVENTION, THE: Signed on February 27, 1884, between the Boers and the British. Article XIV assured all persons, other than natives, full liberty of entry, travel, residence, ownership of property and trade in the South African Republic (or the Transvaal). The Boer Government tried to interpret the word 'natives' to include the Indians, but this view was rejected by the British Government.

MAINE, SIR HENRY SUMNER (1822–1888): Eminent jurist whose works include *Ancient Law*, *Early History of Institutions* and *Village-Communities in the East and West*. Maine was a member of the India Council in 1862–69 and 1871.

MAITLAND, EDWARD (1824–1897): Writer on mystical subjects and devoted to vegetarianism; established the Esoteric Christian Union in 1891. Gandhiji corresponded with him and was considerably influenced by his books.

MEHTA, SIR PHEROZESHAH (1845–1915): Indian leader, dominated the public life of Bombay for a long time; one of the founders of the Bombay Presidency Association and thrice Chairman of the Bombay Municipal Corporation. Member of the Bombay Legislative Council and later, of the Viceroy's Executive Council. One of the pioneer founders of the Indian National Congress in 1885, was elected to its presidentship twice, in 1890 and 1909.

MELMOTH: Township and division of Zululand.

MYSORE: A former Prince's State in South India.

NAOROJI, DADABHAI (1825–1917): Pioneer Indian statesman, often called "the Grand Old Man of India". Thrice presided over the Congress sessions, in 1886, 1893 and 1906. Enunciated, for the first time, Congress goal as one of *Swaraj* or independence. As member of Parliament in 1893, and as leading member of the British Committee of the Congress in London, rendered the cause of India and Indians in South Africa yeoman service.

NAZAR, MANSUKHLAL HIRALAL (1862–1906): Brilliant Indian student who migrated to South Africa in December 1896. Deputed in 1897 to do propaganda in England for the South African Indians. Played notable part in public work and the Indian movement in Natal.

NEWCASTLE: Town in Natal, famed for its coal, maize, wool and tobacco.

NONDWENI: A township and division of Zululand, once known as a mining centre.

OSMAN, DADA: A prominent Indian merchant of Natal, was Secretary of the Natal Indian Congress and participated in the Indian Passive Resistance movement.

PIETERMARITZBURG: Capital of Natal; also known as P.M. Burg or Maritzburg, for short; 71 miles from Durban. Seat of the Colonial Office.

PINETOWN: Small township 17 miles from Durban.

PORT ELIZABETH: Second city and port of the Cape Province.

PRETORIA: Administrative capital of the Union; 511 miles from Durban.

RAJKOT: A former Prince's State in Saurashtra; early home of the Gandhis.

RICHMOND: A town near Pietermaritzburg.

RIPON, LORD (1827–1909): Viceroy of India during 1880–4 and Secretary of State for the Colonies from 1892 to 1895, when Chamberlain succeeded him.

ROBINSON, SIR JOHN (1839-1903): Represented Natal at the Colonial Conference in London, 1887, and first Prime Minister and Colonial Secretary of Natal, 1893-7.

RUSTOMJI, PARSI: Philanthropic and public-spirited Indian merchant in Natal who was first co-worker and staunch friend, and then, client of Gandhiji. He strongly supported the Natal Indian Congress and its work.

SALISBURY: Capital of Southern Rhodesia.

SAXON WITAN: Derived from the word 'Witanagemot' or the Council of the Anglo-Saxon Kings which advised on all matters they chose to refer to it.

Shakuntala: The celebrated Sanskrit drama of Kalidasa, the great Indian poet and dramatist (*circa* 400 A.D.). The verse, quoted on p. 154 *supra*, is the English rendering by E.B. Eastwick of Goethe's famous tribute to the play in 1792.

SORATH: A district in Saurashtra.

STANGER: Historic village north of Durban.

SYDENHAM: A suburb of Durban.

TEUTONIC MARK: An ancient form of assembly prevalent among people of Northern Europe. A community consisting of members related to one another cultivating

their lands in common and administering justice in their own assembly.

TYABJI, BADRUDDIN: (1844-1906) Actively associated with and *de facto* President of the Bombay Presidency Association. Presided over Congress at Madras (1887). Judge of Bombay High Court (1895). Strongly supported movement protesting against ill-treatment of South African Indians. Nominated to the Bombay Legislative Council in 1882, was responsible for introducing legislation for municipal franchise.

UMTALI: A district of Southern Rhodesia, with a town of the same name; a large European settlement.

VERULAM: A historic township 19 miles away from Durban where many free Indians settled down.

VOLKSRUST: Small town in Natal, 308 miles from Durban.

WEBB, ALFRED: Member of Parliament. Contributed frequently to *India* and other periodicals on South African Indian topics, was President of the Congress at its Madras session (1894) and a member of the British Committee.

WEDDERBURN, WILLIAM: Spent 25 years in India as member of the Bombay Civil Service; on his retirement, member of Parliament till 1900. Chairman of the British Committee of the Congress in 1893; president of the Congress in 1910.

WELLINGTON: Town in Cape Colony.

GLOSSARY OF NON-ENGLISH TERMS

Agni Purana — one of the eighteen *puranas* or old sacred Hindu mythological works; it is believed to have been expounded by Agni, the god of fire, dealing with, among other things, ritual worship, duties of kingship and the art of war.

Anadi — without origin or beginning.

Arya Dharma — name by which the ancient religion of Hinduism, from the days of its progenitors, the Indo-Aryans, has become known.

Ashwin — month of the Hindu calendar corresponding to parts of September and October.

Bania — Hindu merchant or trader.

Bhagavadgita — The Song of the Divine One; an 18–canto metrical composition in Sanskrit, based on the *Mahabharata* episode in which Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna, the Pandava Prince, on the battle-field, *Anasakti Yoga* or the gospel of selfless action without attachment to its fruit. Considered the most sacred book of the Hindus.

Bhakti — devotion, or emotional worship of God.

Bhim — second of the Pandava princes, reputed for his gigantic stature and extraordinary strength; one of the principal figures in the epic Mahabharat War.

Brahma — The Cosmic Being; the first of the Hindu Trinity, Creator of the universe.

Brahmin — member of the priestly caste, first of the four Hindu social divisions.

Champeli — a white flower of sweet fragrance.

Coolie — term for porter or hired labourer; in South

Africa, indiscriminately applied to all Indians.

Dewan — Prime Minister in the former Indian States ruled by the Princes.

Erven — land-sites or plots for building in South African townships.

Falgun — month of the Hindu calendar corresponding to parts of February and March.

Gita — see *Bhagavadgita*.

Gujarati — language of the people of Gujarat, northern region of the Bombay State.

Gulli — lane or alley.

Harishchandra — King of Ayodhya, celebrated for his adherence to truth even when put to the severest ordeals. His story is much dramatized in early Indian literature.

Jain — a follower of Vardhamana Mahaveera, the *Jina* (Conqueror of Self), contemporary of the Buddha, who preached a parallel doctrine based on the observance of non-violence towards all living things.

Kaffir — member of a South African race. Loosely applied to natives in South Africa.

Kapila — sage of ancient India, *circa* seventh century B.C., who founded the *Sankhya* system of philosophy, considered to have vindicated the complete independence and freedom of the human mind.

Kshatriya — one belonging to the second, or the warrior, caste, empowered to rule.

Landdrost — South African judge; also inspector or officer.

Mahabharata — The famed epic in Sanskrit verse having for its central theme the Great War between the Pandavas and the Kauravas.

Manu — the symbolical forefather of the human race and earliest Hindu law-giver whose work *Manava-Dharma-*

Shastra or the 'Handbook of the Laws of Manu', is a classic.

Memon — member of a Muslim community native to Cutch and some other parts of India; one of the major elements among Indians in South Africa.

Mogra — the jasmine flower.

Mohatarfa — trade-tax, (a word of Persian origin).

Moksha — salvation, the supreme goal of spiritual life, or liberation from mortal bonds and worldly sufferings, freedom from the cycle of birth and death.

Panchayat — council of five, elected by the village community and invested with authority to manage and control village affairs.

Panini — celebrated grammarian, *circa* sixth century B.C., whose grammar of the Sanskrit language is considered the standard work of its kind.

Pousta — a concoction of opium.

Pruthuraj — mythological king of the Solar Race, famed for his physical prowess.

Rajput — one belonging to a Hindu warrior caste, originally Kshatriyas, hailing from Rajputana, a State in Central India now part of Rajasthan.

Ramayana — the great Indian epic depicting the story of Rama.

Santhals — aboriginal race inhabiting, chiefly, parts of Bengal and Bihar.

Sardar — large landowner; nobleman endowed with land by the State; originally, commander or head of a body of soldiers.

Sarkar mabap — Government as expected to look after its people with parental solicitude.

Shiva — third deity of the Hindu Trinity, symbolizing the Destructive Principle.

Shudra — member of the fourth Hindu social division, originally consigned to manual and menial labour.

Sjambok — South African word for whip made from rhinoceros hide.

Taluk — revenue or administrative division, smaller than a district, comprising several villages and towns.

Tamil — language of the Dravidian group, spoken by people in South India, chiefly in the Madras State.

Telugu — language of the Dravidian group, spoken by people of the Andhra State in South India.

Thakore Saheb — term for rulers of small principalities, especially in the former Kathiawar States or Saurashtra.

Udad dal — a kind of Indian pulse, split into two.

Uitlanders — South African (Dutch) term for White foreigners, generally British subjects, migrated into the Transvaal from other parts of South Africa.

Upanishads — a series of philosophic treatises, forming an important section of the *Vedas* and representing their essence. Their central theme is the origin of the universe, the character of the infinite and the eternal, the nature of the human goal and the relationship of matter and spirit.

Vaishya — member of the trading or third caste in Hindu social hierarchy.

Vedas — originally, orally transmitted texts; these are the earliest known and most ancient sacred Hindu scriptures, claiming divine inspiration. The collection of hymns is in four parts : *Rigveda*, *Samaveda*, *Yajurveda* and *Atharvaveda;* considered by the Hindus the source and storehouse of all knowledge.

Veth — Gujarati word for forced or unpaid labour.

Vishnu — second of the Hindu Trinity, responsible for the preservation of and orderliness in the universe, often manifesting himself in *Avatars*, or incarnations in human form, for supporting good and punishing evil.

Volksraad — sometimes abbreviated to Raad, South African (Dutch) word for National Legislative Assembly in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

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